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IMMANENCE & INCARNATION

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IMMANENCE & INCARNATION

BEING THE NORRISIAN PRIZE ESSAY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE FOR THE YEAR 1924

BY

S. F. DAVENPORT

M.A., LL.B.

St Catharine's College
Cambridge
Burney Prize, 1921

WITH A FOREWORD

BY

F. R. TENNANT, D.D.

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FOREWORD

SOME years ago Mr Davenport frequented my lecture-room at Trinity College, Cambridge; and on the strength of the relationship then established between us he has asked me to write a foreword to this, his first book. I have represented to him that my influence as a teacher is almost exclusively confined to my own University; that to the general theological public I am but little known: and that he would therefore have done better to invite someone to introduce his work whose name carries more weight among the many. But as he persists, with kindly tenacity, in his request, I comply with his wish, though I fear my doing so will be to his own hindrance.

The notion of divine immanence calls for discussion. As applied to the physical world and to human selves, it is generally vague and indefinite. I am perhaps rather solitary in the opinion that it is not so valuable a theological instrument as it has of late years been wont to be accounted. To me 'immanence in' seems to be capable of being no more than a poetic phrase, a spatial metaphor, for 'action upon'; while to 'immanence' abstracted from 'in something' I can attach no meaning at all. Mr Davenport accepts the term as indicating the *rapport* between God and His creatures, on the Godward side; and also as denoting divine maintenance (in existence) of the creaturely. Whether the latter notion is called for or not by theism, may be matter of opinion; but the addition of it to the conception of divine action, directive or other, certainly need not deprive that conception of its definiteness. Inasmuch as Mr Davenport thus far imports definiteness into an idea that has frequently been used without definition, his discussion of immanence, and his learned survey of its various usages, will prove valuable to many students whom, as yet, the literature on the subject has bewildered.

It is not surprising that of late years the idea of divine immanence has been resorted to in discussion of the problem presented to our generation by the Person of our Lord. It lay ready to hand. And when "The Word became flesh," as a key

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to interpreting 'incarnation,' came to present difficulties to many minds, it was natural that "God was in Christ..." should be tentatively adopted as suggesting a more promising approach. Hence the recent Christology, based on the idea of immanence rather than on that of incarnation of a pre-existent Logos; Who, while being the sole 'subject' in the Person of Christ, according to traditional Christology, is not another 'subject' than the Father, according to the traditional doctrine concerning the Trinity. The applicability of the notion of immanence to the problem of the Person of Christ is the central question in Mr Davenport's book; and here again, in collecting and discussing the pronouncements of a variety of authors, he has rendered his readers a service. In spite of difficulties attaching to the Logos-doctrine, he prefers it to the immanence-theory —compatible only with a Christology which many would call merely humanitarian, and itself not free from implication of perplexing obscurities. Into the more ultimate inexplicabilities besetting the former mode of interpretation, and those inherent in the doctrine of the Trinity, Mr Davenport refrains from inquiring. He is deeply imbued with the feeling that precision of thought, in such spheres of discourse, is neither possible nor desirable. In this respect his habit of mind is different from my own; but perhaps on that very account he will succeed in commending his method to many individuals to whom my own would be repellent.

F. R. TENNANT

PREFACE

No one can be more conscious than the author of the shortcomings and necessary defects in this attempt to bring a little more into the light of common day a subject upon which such a little appears to have been written.

From whatever cause, of which I am ignorant, the obscure and intricate problem of 'Immanence and Incarnation' seems never to have had the privilege of being subjected to a regular, penetrative, and thorough treatment; we may perhaps conjecture that this is primarily due to its obscurity and intricacy.

There is no lack of literature that deals with the concept of 'Immanence,' both in its philosophical and religious aspects; and this is equally the case with 'Incarnation'; but, with that subtlest of all problems (as we shall hereafter see), the relation between Immanence and Incarnation, I have searched in vain for light.

Since this is the case, must we conclude that the Immanentists and the Christologists are not on too good terms with each other; or has such an amiable alliance as they might make *inter se* never occurred to either of them?

It will be my pleasant task to unite them (in the pages that follow) in a somewhat closer friendship, for friends they are, and not enemies; but we must be continually bearing in mind that just as there is no permanent intimacy while they for ever remain apart, so there can be none if such a tragedy should occur that they were found to be identical. Friendship can co-exist with sympathy and complementariness; and the virtues that flow from such ideal qualities are not quickly annulled. We may rest assured that the human mind, being fundamentally a perfect unity, can never be permanently in disunion, not even in two of its conceptions, and for this reason the advent of the 'Absolute,' although, maybe, at present only in prophecy, is certain. The search for unity in the macrocosm is guaranteed its goal, because the goal is the presupposition of the search itself; or in the words of Pascal, "Thou couldst not seek for Me, unless thou hadst already found Me."

Considerable perplexity beset me as to how best to form the divisions of the book. The whole subject at times seemed to swell to one of uncouth dimensions.

The first chapter contains a brief discussion of certain philosophical positions in the realm of ontology. To trespass upon epistemological preserves appeared to me illegitimate, and an unpardonable digression into realms from which one only escapes with difficulty.

My reasons for such a philosophical prelude were that, firstly, it is desirable to exclude certain attitudes towards the universe that are obviously incompatible with any real conception of Immanence at all. Amongst such attitudes, I shall include Pantheism, and some forms of Absolutism. Secondly, clarity of exposition demands that the philosophical terminology should be used with precision and definite connotation, so far as this is possible; definition is next to impossible in a region where every term is fluid.

Thirdly, as in the instance of Immanence, on many philosophical premisses Incarnation is regarded as *à priori* impossible; it might almost be true to say that on most philosophical premisses is this the case.

Finally, the meanings of such concepts as Immanence and Incarnation signify entirely diverse things when viewed, for example, on the background of Hegelian Absolutism, or Plotinian mysticism.

In my opinion Immanence and Incarnation demand a certain setting, a certain framework, if they are to be legitimate conceptions at all; and they definitely exclude other settings, other frameworks.

Be it far from me to exclude latitude of treatment, by undue limitation of the territory in advance, yet surely Incarnation is excluded *in toto* if either pantheism or deism is regarded as the true philosophical view of the universe.

These reasons will perhaps be a sufficient justification for such a brief introduction as I have given to the subject.

In the second chapter various types of Immanence are considered. Whatever views may be held concerning the

usefulness of the conception of Immanence at all, and no doubt a mist surrounds the term, yet there still remains a true sense in which "God sleeps in the stone, He dreams in the animal, and awakes in man."

The third chapter deals with the relation between Immanence and the cosmic concepts, creation and evolution. With Professor Ward, I regard 'creation' as one of our fundamental terms; while 'evolution,' whether scientifically or philosophically treated, has always been an attitude behind which many varying schools of thought have delighted to hide.

In the fourth chapter Immanence is contrasted with the complementary conception, Transcendence. As against certain systems, it is here maintained that these are truly reciprocal notions, and mutually involve each other. Together they herald the greater and consummating act of creation, namely 'Incarnation,' which, when divorced, neither could do.

Chapters five and six are confined to the other limb of our subject, Incarnation. Throughout, however, only those aspects of the Incarnation are treated that will aid in elucidating its relation to Immanence; and in consequence many well-known theories of the Incarnation are omitted in chapter five, as having little or no relevancy to the subject in hand.

In a sense, up to the present, we have but been preparing the ground for the centre chapter that is to follow.

I became convinced that no satisfactory solution could be arrived at unless we had abided long in the antechamber, preparing, by all the means in our power, to be finally ushered into the presence.

The conclusion of our examination is the argument in the seventh chapter, in which we have attempted to harmonise and combine the results reached in the preceding pages.

Finally, it seemed to me fitting that the last chapter should relate the Incarnation to the Trinity; for we are told, on the one hand, by many leading thinkers to-day that "The philosophy of the Absolute" must, of necessity, be the last word, the final expression of the philosophic spirit; and on the other, by a no less leading thinker, but this time in the sphere of religion, that

The Son must be subject, ultimately, to the Supreme God, that God may be all in all.

Here I desire to state my conviction that the impulses, both of St Paul and the Absolutist, though only, as yet, in potency, and bearing fruits in different channels, are fundamentally identical; and it is for this reason that the last chapter has been added.

My indebtedness to other authors covers such an extensive field that I can but enumerate those to whom I owe most in the way of material for thought.

I should be glad to receive information, should I be in error in thinking that no *important* work bearing upon the subject has escaped my notice. Of *modern* literature, I venture to think that I have made an almost exhaustive study.

In the realm of philosophy my principal obligations are to Mr F. Platt's *Immanence and Christian Thought*; Professor C. C. J. Webb's works; Baron von Hügel's works; W. H. Moberly's article "God and the Absolute" in *Foundations*; Professor A. Seth Pringle-Pattison's *The Idea of God*.

On the philosophy of the Absolute, I desire especially to mention Dr F. H. Bradley, Dr B. Bosanquet, and G. W. F. Hegel, more particularly his *Philosophy of Religion*.

When treating of the philosophy of mysticism Dr W. R. Inge's works have been invaluable; I owe most to his Gifford Lectures, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*. Two articles in two successive monthly issues of *Theology* by the Abbot of Pershore on Mystical Devotion are excellent.

My two principal references on oriental philosophy have been Mr A. H. Bowman's *Christian Thought and Hindu Philosophy*; and the recently published work of Professor S. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*. Where reference has been made to the classical systems, unless the original works are quoted, the histories that I have made most use of are those of Erdmann and O. Pfleiderer, vols. I and II.

In the chapters dealing with Immanence I believe my chief obligations are to Mr F. Platt, cf. above; *Encyclopaedia of*

Religion and Ethics, art. "Immanence," by A. C. McGiffert; W. L. Walker, *The Spirit and the Incarnation*; Dr H. M. Relton, *A Study in Christology*; F. W. Butler, *Can we dispense with Christianity?*; and some articles by Dr H. Rashdall.

In chapters five and six that deal with Christology, besides some of those already mentioned, such as Dr Relton's and W. L. Walker's works, I must mention that considerable light upon many of the difficult problems involved was afforded by the works of Dr F. R. Tennant, art. "Present Condition of the Doctrines of the Incarnation and the Trinity," *Constructive Quarterly*, 1920; and art. "The Present Condition of Some Fundamental Christian Doctrines"; Professor H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ*; W. N. Clarke, *The Christian Doctrine of God*; W. H. G. Holmes, *The Presence of God*; *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, art. "Incarnation," by G. A. Barton; J. S. Johnston, *The Philosophy of the Fourth Gospel*; Dr A. M. Fairbairn's works; D. W. Forrest, *The Christ of History and of Experience*; E. L. Strong, *The Incarnation of God*; Dr P. T. Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*.

In the final chapter on "Incarnation and Trinity," A. Vonier, *The Personality of Christ*; and J. M. E. McTaggart, *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*, have been sources of much help, besides other works of absolutist writers.

My best thanks are due to the readers of the Cambridge University Press for many helpful suggestions and corrections in the text.

Should this attempt of mine encourage others to pursue the whole subject further, my labours will be amply rewarded.

S. F. D.

KEW, 1924

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INTRODUCTION

My perplexity was considerable, at the outset of the subject, to arrive at any definite mode of treating a problem that seemed to admit of being approached from a multitude of angles.

Writers innumerable have dealt, in one way or another, with the philosophical doctrine of immanence; they have handled it as a concept at once comprehensive and worthy of serious consideration. But there is another class of writer that appears to think the whole treatment of Immanence, rather than possessing any result of permanent value, is labour that could have been more profitably expended elsewhere.

Maybe the fault must be pronounced to lie entirely on my side; but my inability to sympathise with the latter point of view has not been lessened by pondering upon counsels of perfection, no doubt beyond my reach.

It may readily be admitted that it is a mark of a low level of thinking to demand definiteness, either in thought or in expression, for there are no logical barriers set up between terms whose proper function should be to navigate the shores of Infinitude.

Allow me to illustrate my meaning by the use of a famous example. Hegel made a very important contribution to philosophical psychology when he explained the process by which the mind of man attains to truth. We start, he said, by the simple triad of thesis, antithesis and synthesis, where a certain mental attitude passes over into its opposite, and is then led on by the whole truth, implicit in the mind, to combine these two seeming contradictions into the synthesis.

This, he says, is due to the innate and inherent dialectic within the mind itself; it is the expression, in the realm of Truth, of that dynamic germ that worketh all in all.

The process continues by successive trinities, but on different and higher planes of thought, until a curious result somewhat changes the state of affairs.

At these higher levels the mind gradually is found to desert its former triadic movement, and passes from point to point

by "a collapse into immediacy." The definiteness and distinctness, that were formerly the qualities of the terms in use, have vanished; now the terms interpenetrate each other, they are in each other, they have become fluid. Perhaps this curious yet true method of dialectical advance is due to our thoughts being steeped in feeling; maybe there is a more profound reason why such a process is characteristic of the mind; and in a subsequent part of the essay attempts at a solution of this most interesting fact are made.

In handling such a conception as that of Immanence, we have but to elevate our thought upon a sufficiently high plane to enable us to perceive, not only that we may not, but that we cannot employ any terms that savour of completeness, preciseness, or finality.

Thick darkness is round about it, and he who would dispel the darkness does so at the cost of truth, for 'omnia exeunt in mysterium.' So clear does it appear that the Immanence of God in the universe has a meaning, a meaning, moreover, which conveys ideas to every enlightened mind, that were the term to be abolished, another would have to be invented to express such a perfectly natural relationship between the Creator and the created.

At this point nothing has been, nor indeed need be, said as to how, or the manner of, God's immanence in His works. In wandering mazes lost we should undoubtedly be were we, with little or no premisses, to embark upon such abstruse and difficult perplexities at such a premature stage of our enquiries.

When once the signification of the term 'immanence' is grasped, the problem of immanence becomes a pressing one, and by no means capable of being simply and easily solved.

Metaphor and allegory have to be summoned to our rescue in cases where more exact reasoning, although more desirable, is clearly impossible. Maybe, from the very nature of our subject, the finite mind, as finite, can never arrive at any final conclusion as concerns the true and only relationship between the Infinite and the finite. To adequately and fully comprehend God's relation to the world, surely no less than God's knowledge would be sufficient, since both sides of the relation would need to be grasped.

The maintenance has been upheld in this thesis that, while it is next to impossible to discriminate with any degree of accuracy between the philosophical and religious aspects of immanence, so closely are they knit together, yet the bond of union, expressed by the term 'immanence,' between God and the world is one that is intelligible, rational, and therefore legitimate; it can, in consequence, fittingly form one limb of a discussion relating to the distinction and affinity between the two conceptions of Immanence and Incarnation.

If this is at all a true account of the fate or fortune of our first concept, perhaps facts are not wanting to pronounce a similar verdict upon the alternative one, that of Incarnation. Many and various are the objections brought to bear upon the possibility of such an act appearing upon the stage of history. No such thing as an Incarnation of the Supreme God is allowable, say some, in any possible world. They advance *à priori* arguments in plenty to refute such a preposterous notion. "The heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee," how then can the Unconditioned be limited to a specific and single instance, an instance that appeared once upon a time in some remote corner of a supremely insignificant planet?

But, as it has always seemed to me, those who make use of such arguments as these are extremely liable to fall into their own net.

If it is the fact that, in the region of thought, in the region of concepts, Incarnation is not only a possible, but a real concept; not only a skeleton, but a reality clothed in flesh and blood, then how, and by what logic, if logic it be, can we exclude the reality, no longer in the thought world, but in the world of fact, of an actual Incarnation?

Fully aware am I that such a device, which in my opinion is not merely a logical quibble, trembles upon the brink of an unpardonable and terrible fallacy.

Is it not implied, it may be said, that every reality in the world of idea is also a reality in the world of fact? Is it not implied that the sphere of the real is co-extensive with the sphere of the possible? Finally, has not Kant taught us the lesson, once for all,

that all arguments with 'idea' premisses can never arrive at 'factual' conclusions?

The bankruptcy of the ontological argument must form the final word by dispelling the logic that would trespass from the epistemological into the ontological preserves.

This piece of criticism seems formidable enough on the surface, and promises to put an end to the validity of the transition from possible to actual Incarnation. Perhaps, however, were we to plunge a little deeper, the matter could not be so lightly set aside.

It is an undoubted fallacy to argue from ideas to facts, and we all act in everyday life upon the supposition of this truth. But there is, as Kant pointed out, a unique exception to this rule. When the idea is that of God, by which is included the totality of things, the case takes a different turn. True, for him, the reasoning was no more valid from the thought of God to His reality, than was that in every other instance; but Hegel has, as I think, sounded the knell to Kant's criticism of the argument.

Hegel agrees that there is no transition logically from the possible to the real, from idea to fact, yet denies the correctness of Kant's initial position by commencing with God, as He exists for thought alone. From God as thought there is no step to God as real, because the former contains *less* than the latter. Reality is greater than thought, and unless we start with the greater, we shall never reach it by any logical process possible.

Analysis has already performed its deadly work when we arrive at God as thought; and what originally God has joined together man has sundered to his own loss.

Once again, is possibility more extensive than reality? All reality would seem to exhaust all possibility, since the possible means the possibly actual, which, unless included within all actuality, is inevitably impossible.

Incarnation then cannot be pronounced to be *à priori* impossible. Logic knows of but one criterion of the possible, that of contradiction; and it has been well known of old that no empirical proposition involves any contradiction.

Pure thought could as little foretell all future events, which have always an element of the absolutely new in them, as Hegel's

Absolute Idealism could possibly be a correct account of the evolution of the world, or realisation of the Idea.

In this essay the subject, Incarnation, will be taken to signify the Christian Incarnation alone. There are those, it cannot be disputed, for whom this restriction upon the use of the term would seem to be quite unwarranted. They, no doubt, would give a larger space to considerations that lie without the limits of the Christian revelation.

The rendering of the word *avatar*, although in strictness, a descent, might be taken to imply some sort of incarnation of a God in the form of man.

The East has, of long ago, been feeling for some conception that brings the Gods, those lofty and celestial beings who inhabit eternity, into closer contact and fellowship with men, who resemble in part the cave-dwellers of Plato.

The need for such a union has existed for centuries, and still exists to-day. The intellect has been strained to breaking-point in search of the thought that would finally and for ever synthesise and consummate the yearnings of the human heart. But has either the need attained any lasting satisfaction, or the intellect arrived at any asylum wherein it may peacefully and proudly repose?

We, in the light of the True Light that lighteth every man coming into the world, cannot waver in our answer. If never before, we are convinced that it is experience, and experience alone, which presents to us the key to life's and the world's mystery. Our hearts are assured that a great gulf is fixed between the many lights of the world and the One Light.

The Refuge and the Rest of both yearning and mind, of conation, cognition and affection, are discovered in *The Incarnation* of the Only-Begotten alone.

But once again, to launch out into primitive conceptions of incarnation, to trace the history of man's religious development up to the present day, would involve a thorough study of anthropology, magic, mythology, and perhaps comparative religion. This treatise must end somewhere, and, partly for the sake of brevity, it is imperative that the whole domain of oriental thought in this direction should be excluded from a systematic study.

As this book will argue later, Incarnation, as understood by Christianity, is by no means synonymous with a divinely filled man. Between unique inspiration, to whatever degree of intensity this may extend, and Incarnation, there is an unfathomable barrier that forbids all identity.

Throughout the world men have appeared at various periods of its history either claiming to be divinely sent, divinely gifted, divinely blessed, or have had this claim made on their behalf. Their devotees have gradually come to clothe the object of their worship with the halo of deity, a spectacle that can be witnessed in almost any religion that has yet tabernacled amongst us.

This natural tendency of the adoring spirit finds its significance, not because of the worthiness of the object adored, but because of the psychological need of adoring some object.

History of religion abounds in proofs that the heart of mankind is restless, with a restlessness, moreover, not to be allayed by anything short of the Infinite; yet it cannot prove, and never will be able to prove, that such dissatisfaction can be quelled by anything but by resting in Him. The psychological fact is sufficiently attested by the verdict of history, but her incompetence to prove the metaphysical reality is obvious. The validity of the objective of faith, of devotion, lies beyond her province, because beyond her ken.

If all religions up to the advent of Christ were man's search after God, Christianity may fitly be called God's search after men. This has been truly said, but whereas in the former case the search was unsuccessful, in spite of its perseverance, in the latter God discovered His erring children, as He alone could do.

The transition from the religion and philosophy of mythology into the religion and philosophy of revelation may be a natural one, but while the former terminates in man's god, the latter terminates in God's Man. To confuse, as the Orient appears to have done, the god of apotheosis with the god of Incarnation, may be an easy mistake into which to fall, yet the difference is so vast that no less a consequence than man's doom or man's deliverance depends upon the issue.

The above reasons must form the basis of my silence respecting

all other doctrines of incarnation, except *The Incarnation* of the Son of God. I trust that there are those who will agree with me that between pre-Incarnational and post-Incarnational theology and religion there has intervened an act which forbids any essential affinity of the two stages of man's evolution.

Sufficient has been stated in the Preface to explain the reason for the divisions of the whole subject. As it was there said, an introductory chapter on certain philosophical positions that have been held in the past and are still held to-day, perhaps unconsciously in a majority of cases, seemed to me vital to any lucid treatment of either Immanence or Incarnation.

Most readily, as aforesaid, we agree that a haziness surrounds the term, 'Immanence' of God, a haziness that can be partially dispelled by an investigation of our philosophical background alone. Numerous terms with a philosophical connotation occur in our discussion of the Immanentist theories, for is not Immanence more of a philosophical than a religious attitude? To signify precision to a certain degree, to convey an atmosphere which is the proper function of words, is quite out of the question unless a prior examination of those words has been undertaken.

Before embarking upon *the* problem of the whole subject, with which Chapter VII essays to deal, an independent study of each conception as such is entered into, that is, of Immanence and Incarnation, in order to prepare the ground for the final treatment. We shall not understand how those mutually complementary terms, those mutually complementary view-points of the relationship between God and the world, can be finally synthesised, nor shall we perceive in what way they *are* mutually complementary, unless we can arrive at a certain definiteness with regard to the conceptions themselves.

The author trusts that, should he feel himself necessitated in repetition here and there throughout the work, this error may receive the pardon of his readers, as he finds that the difficulty is insurmountable in the case of kindred subjects being treated from different standpoints.

Allow me to instance a few examples of this embarrassment. Deism is the false position that regards the Deity as enthroned

far above all heavens, Whose ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts. He is likened to an oriental sultan who spurns contamination with his subjects. This must always be representative of pure transcendence in the realm of philosophy.

Panentheism, another attitude that falls for our consideration, is borrowed from Krause, and signifies in religious terminology, "in Him we live and move and have our being." It is the view that holds, in some sense, God is all, while denying all is God. All is *in* God, for He is all there is, yet He is *more* than all there is.

Malebranche's famous statement would directly flow from panentheism, "We see all things in God, for God is the place of spirits."

It takes but little discernment to trace the similarity between this doctrine and, let us say, the problem of 'Immanence and Creation,' which confronts us in the third chapter.

Again no delicacy of intellectual poise can for ever differentiate Panentheism from the subject treated in the fourth chapter, 'Immanence and Transcendence.' Will anyone deny that once more, in the central chapter of the essay (Chapter VII), this doctrine must find a necessary place?

It might not be altogether erroneous to call Panentheism a cold and intellectual form of true mysticism, a mysticism that arrives at the conclusion, not that we behold the Deity and It is absorbed into us, but on the contrary, that in beholding God, we are absorbed into Him. The former *may be* Pantheism, the latter certainly is not, in spite of the Englishman's craving to retain his individualism.

The species of Absolutism current at the present time are legion. Eastern thought is gradually leavening the philosophic spirit of the West, by converting the *ethical* into the *mystical*. Absolutism is the true philosophy of mysticism; but I will not venture to say amongst the various forms of Absolutism which of them approaches nearest to the truth; far easier would it be to decide those varieties of the same which could never be true expressions of the ultimate goal of thought.

No one can fail to observe how closely related the doctrines of 'universal incarnation' and Christologies of 'self-realisation,'

if Christologies they be, must be to philosophical absolutism. Any discussion of the one is necessitated in covering a large portion of the ground which is the territory of the other. The same must, I fear, be said about the final chapter. There are thinkers, who are also theologians, who would pronounce such a parallel as unthinkable, as impossible. They, no doubt, would write off 'the Absolute' as a mere plaything of the philosopher; or they might even honour it with such a title as the 'goal of thought'; but to admit it within sacred precincts, to exalt it to the throne of the Universe, would be sheer blasphemy. My only advice to such would be to reconsider whether the God of religion, by which I mean the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, is not identical with the Absolute, the supreme goal of thought.

It would relieve both the heart from many searchings and the head from as many perplexities if we gave up worshipping the anthropomorphic god of our own making, the semi-human Deity of popular devotion, and worshipped the true God instead—a God Who dwelleth in the light that no man can approach unto, a God about Whom are thick clouds and darkness. While the one will never resemble 'the Absolute,' the other does, for it has that elusiveness, that mysteriousness enveloping it, rendering it a fit object of adoration, because mystery is the incense of a true worship.

The province of an introduction is not to trespass unduly upon the land reserved for the text; anticipation possesses its own proper limits, beyond which expediency holds up a warning hand. So much it seemed advisable to say to prepare the reader for any strange, and perhaps a little obscure, relationships that he may find taken for granted throughout the work. If some approaches to ancient problems show signs of a marked departure from customary precedent, I must plead that there is such a thing as 'the personal element,' which defies precise analysis.

Before bringing this introduction to a close, a word in connexion with the present state of theological and religious thought may not be out of place.

As in most other branches of learning, reaction to former modes and conceptions appears to have impressed its mark

indelibly upon every phase of man's mental activity. No longer can we be content with presenting old truths in new lights. Each age, we feel sure, has its vocation to fulfil, its tasks and duties to perform. Great events in the immediate past have once again compelled us to ask the question: Have we been building our castles, those gigantic superstructures which seemed to be of inestimable value, upon the sands?

The passion for facts, that may perhaps be the watchword of the times, is the dynamic impulse of our science. Natural science, we cannot doubt it, is in the ascendancy to-day. Every eye, whether it is that of the philosopher, theologian or literary writer, must be turned towards the scientist. One and all they should welcome, as part of their own domain, any assured result that may be reached in this direction. The time has long gone by, so we hope, when the disgraceful war was waged between philosopher and scientist, on the one hand, and theologian and scientist on the other.

If he knows his business the scientist will confess that he moves entirely within the realm of phenomena; things as they appear must be his sole interest, his sole problem, and things as they appear his sole reward, his sole ambition to discover.

Facts of a certain order he and he alone has power to decide, and to accept his bequest to knowledge is the wisest counsel to give to the philosopher. Vistas of reality lie beyond his purview into which the thinker in terms of metaphysics and morals can enter and make his own.

Deeper than matter and its laws is life with its laws; deeper still lies the rich and marvellous world of mind and her laws; or once more, deeper than all lies spirit and its laws.

If I am correct, the sphere in which the pure thinker moves is the sphere of mind; when he passes into the deeper and more awful, yet most wonderful and mysterious realm of spirit, he ceases to be a *pure* thinker, and becomes in part a theologian. This being the case between the philosopher and the scientist, how shall we, in a similar way, reconcile the theologian to both?

Allow one of our poets, Tennyson, to state the solution to this dilemma in that inimitable way in which poets alone can excel:

God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.[1]

The poet can perceive no contradiction between the scientific law of thunder, and the law being a mode of God's working; for what reason should the theologian find a rock of offence in this solution? We may conjecture that poetic insight and discernment, the depth of feeling that alone exalts the writer of verse, has triumphed where more exact and analytic thinking has stumbled. How often does not intuitive feeling sense the key to such difficulties, while the more discursive treatment, just because it is discursive, falls into a false dualism!

Will and mind are the truth of law and order, all physical events have psychical concomitants, there is a material interpretation and there is a mental and moral interpretation. The philosopher will choose the latter explanation, the scientist the former, and in a sense both are right and both are wrong.

Lastly, we must not forget the theologian. There is a metaphysic, and there is a metaphysic of faith; a moral philosophy we know, ethics of faith we also know. The glory of the terrestrial is one, the glory of the celestial is another. Not until the whole has been interpreted in terms of spirit, not until the advent of God have we attained to any ultimate solution of our difficulties.

A movement has made its appearance in our own time, in the circle of theology, that favours a return to the Antiochene standpoint of Christology. As of old, say the adherents of this school, we must take our point of departure from the perfect manhood of Christ. Mind, heart and will must pursue this path to the end before they join unanimously, which they will do, in declaring Him King of kings and Lord of lords. "God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God" is the necessary postulate, the inevitable inference, from the humanitarian study of His Person, but to presuppose this at the start is an illegitimate method of procedure.

At all costs the reality of His humanity is to be preserved, the equal reality of His deity will 'emerge' as we proceed; He will

[1] Tennyson, *The Higher Pantheism.*

be proclaimed by and by, within the sacred sanctuary of the soul, as our index to the nature of the Godhead; He will be enthroned as Lord on the supreme seat of the universe.

This being the approach to Christology that commends it to so many thinkers to-day, it was inevitable that the problem of Immanence and Incarnation should appear before very long.

God is immanent in varying degrees of intensity, either by His power, His life, His goodness or His love, in all things, in all men. He was present uniquely and perfectly in the One Man, Christ Jesus. What is the significance of such a presence? What are the problems raised by unique and final immanence? What do we mean in speaking of Incarnation? In what sense does Christ differ from all other men that have been and are yet to be? These and many others are the questions that press for solution. They are urgent, we feel; they demand our recognition and our earnest consideration.

If we are wise we shall have learnt the lesson that science has to teach us; *continuity* throughout every department of nature, every phase of inorganic, organic, and mental life, is a watchword.

The theologian must abide by this principle, he must take to heart the warning of Leibnitz that "nature makes no leaps." He must be alive, both to the increasing purpose running through the ages, from the first form of life to the highest form known amongst mortal men; and also to the radical difference engendered by progress itself, by creative evolution, between the lowest and the highest.

Upon these fundamental truths this essay proposes to examine Immanence and Incarnation. Identity and confusion are pitfalls, both equally dangerous, because both virtually deny that there is any problem to solve. It is for the reason that we believe there to be such a problem—one, moreover, by no means patient of any easy solution—that the attempt has here been made to shed such slight lights upon the subject, that those who come after, being embarrassed by the same perplexities, may not find the ground entirely untrodden, but take hope, seeing that others have experienced similar difficulties in arriving at any satisfactory solution.

CHAPTER I

PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTIONS

At the outset of our enquiry we are confronted with certain well-known philosophical theories of the universe. To review these, with a brevity sufficient to any lucid understanding of such positions, is quite essential before we can hope to make useful progress into the main subject of our thesis.

Six of the familiar philosophic doctrines will engage our attention, but these will refrain from entering upon the province of epistemology, a province which would be unprofitable to consider without further complication in an already complicated subject. In every case, the name of each position concerns the relation between God, or the ultimate reality, whatever that may prove itself to be, and the world, including all that is comprehended in that term.

It is within the realm of ontology that we shall move; for the last problem for philosophy is an ontological one.

(*a*) *Pantheism.*

The doctrine of Pantheism has assumed as many forms, as many shades of variety, as almost any other theory. In this coat of many colours it has flourished in a few of the Neo-Platonists, in Greece, in India, especially in Brahmanism, the Upanishads and Vedanta philosophy, and in mediaeval and modern times. Some poets have sung its praises, and it is had in honour by not a few theologians, so subtle and yet so dangerous is its pervasive influence.

A. E. Garvie points out that the multitude of conceptions which go under the name of Pantheism may vary to a very large extent. Spinoza has been called a pantheist, but Hegel was right in preferring the name 'acosmist.' The world was absorbed in the Deity; thought and extension were but two of the infinite number of attributes belonging to God. He was able to say that man's love for God was but God loving Himself in man. His was a passive and deterministic pantheism, which evoked a

reaction in favour of the dynamic power of spirit from the person of Leibnitz. Haeckel, says Garvie, was a materialistic monist. So emphatic was he in retaining the reality of the cosmos, conceived, however, in terms of materialism, that in so doing he lost sight of the greater reality, God. Here the alternative extreme is reached, pancosmism; here θεός is a mere name to denote the universe in its totality.

In the metaphysics of pantheism surely man and the divine are identical. Man and everything else are absolute through the laws of their own spirit or constitution. There can be no logical advance or progress; ascent to God is an impossibility, for the simple reason that the two are but one. This is, it seems, what the true pantheist must arrive at ultimately. To refrain from using the term 'part of' is advisable, spirits or minds are not part of other minds or spirits.

Pope is a true pantheist in his lines in the *Essay on Man*:

> All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
> Whose body nature is, and God the soul;
> That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same;
> . . . . . .
> Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
> Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
> Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
> As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart:
> As full, as perfect, in vile Man that mourns,
> As the rapt seraph that adores and burns;
> To Him no high, no low, no great, no small;
> He fills, He bounds, connects, and equals all.

This variety is clear that God can be *identified* with this and that thing, this and that person. There is no gap between the 'is' and the 'ought to be,' man has nothing to cast off, nothing to become. Degrees of reality, degrees of immanence are impossible, for this implies difference, whereas there is no difference.

But once again, there is a class of pantheist that would call this a mere travesty of their position. Only in the absolute totality is there identity. God = the all, He is the all-embracing, all-containing whole, but in no sense to be equated with any

single part of that whole. An analogy may be the familiar one of a work of art. Although each spot of paint in a picture, each note in a harmony, each word in a poem, is not beautiful, yet the picture, the harmony, the poem is so; the complex relationships involved in organic wholes render all such problems exceedingly intricate and difficult.

The God of Pantheism may be "as full, as perfect, in a hair as heart," and yet not *be* the hair or the heart; but, we may ask, how is this truly pantheism? If the equation is valid only in the single case of the whole; then, with reference to the parts, we have a doctrine of immanence. Contradictions would undoubtedly arise were it possible to identify God both with the whole and each of the parts. The spiritual and temporal continuum can be taken as truly symbolic of the mental, or even spiritual orders, and since parts are not equal to wholes, nor wholes to the whole, neither is the all-prevailing and comprehensive One equal to its differentiations.

The *nature* of the God of Pantheism is another matter; it may be of an idealistic or a naturalistic kind, it may resemble the absolute of Spinoza or of Haeckel; it may resemble the Absolute Self of the Vedanta. In some respects it is unfair to class the philosophy of India, that is, in its ripest fruit, where it blossoms forth in that wonderful product of human reason, the Upanishads, as pantheistic.

A. S. Geden maintains that we might as fitly call the doctrine of the *ātman* mystical, or even theistic. Certainly the Western mind is only confused as well as misled by the inappropriate title Pantheism, in this connexion.

According to the Vedanta, when we try to realise the inner essence of anything, we see nothing but God. In a very real sense this is one form of immanence, as we shall hereafter argue, rather than a pantheistic position.

The difference between the Vedanta and Pantheism may be thus summed up: the former holds that God is the one underlying essence of phenomena, which are but the results of name and form superimposed upon the essence; the latter that God is the sum total of phenomena.

India regards all multiplicity, all manifestation and appearance as an obstruction, a veil, or *māyā*; in reality, plurality is the gigantic illusion that shrouds the one sole Brahman from mortal vision, from mortal mind. No truth is to be attributed to the many, the play of the One must not be taken seriously. In subjective mind alone can the false show arise, annihilate the same, and a pure profound and fathomless calm ensues.

Pantheism is quite other than this. Reality is predicable of the multiplicity, sometimes to the exclusion of Brahmā altogether. Not only are phenomena regarded as real, but, in some instances, identified with essence. Idealistic pantheism approaches nearest to the oriental type, and in systems that have made their appearance in European thought, one might conjecture that not the least influence therein had been contributed by the Upanishads themselves.

Hegel's comment upon Indian pantheism is of value; he illustrates the aspect adopted towards God, and the consequent reason for numerous incarnations. He says that subjectivity, human existence, is only an accidental form: in God it is simply a mask which Substance adopts and changes in an accidental way. God as Spirit, however, contains in Himself the moment of subjectivity, of singleness; His manifestation, accordingly, can only be a single one, can only take place once.[1] If the final truth about God is Substance rather than Spirit, if personality and existence for selfness is one of the many illusions, it is not difficult to see the logic of India's deifications. Hegel maintains that this is the most developed form of pantheism, denying that the identifying of the totality with God is pantheism at all, except to the opponents of the doctrine. To deny the reality of the finite as finite, to perceive its reality to consist entirely in the infinite, this is true pantheism. The divinity of the all must give way to the allness of the divine, a very different proposition, and one, so he would declare, that demanded higher categories of thought to comprehend its truth.

In spite of Hegel, numerous witnesses may be produced to

[1] See Hegel, *Philosophy of Religion*.

demonstrate that there are other forms of pantheism than those to which he would alone assign the title, a title, moreover, to which he takes objection as inevitably leading to ambiguities.

What is the view that pantheism takes of the Christian Trinity? A confusion arises at the outset that must eternally differentiate it from the Christian standpoint.

The Logos, or Divine Reason, is God in operation, God as present and working, not necessarily in creation, but as opposed to Himself. The Son is God as He distinguishes Himself from Himself, and proceeds from Himself, though we are not at liberty to say that this procession is the cause of the created world. According to pantheism, God *in operation* is identified with God as He is in Himself, or in terms of Christian theology, 'the Spirit' is identified with 'the Father.'

While acosmism denies the manifestation of God, and admits the Father only; pancosmism denies the Father, and retains the manifestation, with the important modification that 'manifestation' conveys a false impression.

Creation always avoids pantheism, but it has its own insuperable difficulties. If it is impossible to add the 'godness of all to the Allness of God,' it is equally impossible for the creationist to arrive at any satisfactory solution of the origination of the ὕλη, the not-being that yet is, out of which all things are made.

Dr Matthews is able to say that as respects Incarnation, pantheism has one of two alternatives, either to reject such an act as absurd, or reject all other theories which maintain its absurdity. There is either no Incarnation or nothing but an incarnation; perhaps it would not be a grievous error to account the choice of either alternative as a matter of indifference.

To discuss all the implications in the direction of ethics and free-will, although by no means unimportant, would lead us too far astray. Strictly construed it is difficult to see what the difference is for pantheism between existential propositions and those asserting worth or value. Each species of the conception that shelters behind the word might require different treatment, and this is but a brief survey of ontological attitudes.

(*b*) *Deism.*

The error of pantheism is that in confusing the world with God, any reality that should be predicated of God apart from the world is lost to sight. Deism goes astray in the opposite direction by interposing such a rigid and impenetrable barrier between God and the world that all connexion which ought to unite the two is forfeited. The Deistic notion of God prevailed in Confucianism, Mahommedanism, the Leibnitz-Wolffian school in Germany, in England during the eighteenth century, amongst the Socinians and in the rationalism of Kant and Herbart.

The cardinal and initial mistake in deism is to lay too great an emphasis upon the *will*. Whenever and wherever ethical attributes are put in the forefront, whenever God is regarded as *fully* revealed by "Holy, Holy, Holy," a form of deism is unavoidable. While pantheism delighted to say that God was "closer to us than breathing, nearer than hands and feet," deism is only happy when it can declare that He is "higher than the heavens: what can thou do?" The high and lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity deigns but seldom to meddle with creatures so infinitely His inferior, but when such visitations from the exalted One do occur, the incomprehensibility, following in their train, rightly renders them worthy of the name of miracle.

The attributes associated with the deity are: omnipotence, eternity, self-containedness, majesty. Through an arbitrary act of will, a mere fiat, was the world created, and henceforth allowed to run its course under the superintendency of laws, resembling those of the Medes and Persians. Pantheism forgets the absolute subject in its zeal for the absolute substance, deism knows only of the absolute subject. It is difficult to determine whether this latter belief is logically committed to a dualism. Pfleiderer maintains that, as a matter of history, the result of deism has been either pancosmism or atheism. He cites the instances of the Kantian deism passing through Fichtean idealism to the anthropologism of Feuerbach, and English deism through French naturalism to the present day (1885) positivism.[1]

Connected with dualism arise the inherent difficulties of the

[1] See Hegel, *Philosophy of Religion*, vol. III.

system of deism. Any doctrine that holds to the validity of the conception of *creation* has always to face the problem that must be asked of it, yet can never admit of an answer: Whence the created, and its relation to the Creator? Ascribing the world to the might of will, how does will produce matter? What is the relation between *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*? Analogies and metaphors drawn from the world of sense are misleading, chiefly because of the objection raised by Kant; human constructors are not *creators* of the material with which they work, their skill consists in adapting and informing the medium in accordance with the expression desired to be conveyed.

Pantheism and deism, being antithetic positions, are excellently suited to balance each other. Where one is strong the other is weak, and according to Hegel, the truth of both is found in a higher third, their synthesis, which unites without annulling both complementary truths.

The harmony of the abstract monistic substance of pantheism with the unconditioned subject of deism was the task set for the great German idealists from Schelling to Hegel. Their success or failure to accomplish the task must be left to the reader to determine. Neither pure immanence nor pure transcendence is a possible theory of the universe in its relation to God. The unity must not be recognised without the universe, nor the universe without the unity, says B. Bosanquet.

As against the omission of the transcendent, arguments are not lacking to show how contradictory are the conclusions at which we must arrive in such a case.

The process itself cannot explain past events and future events: they persist in the present, but what if they are forgotten? What is the relation of any term in the process to the whole of reality? "Nothing pre-existent nothing transcendent" is the watchword of the neo-idealist. Reality is historic through and through and the whole progression is moved by the dialectic of finite spirit according to the ultimate structure of spirit. Nothing outside is real.

Ideal eternal history becomes historical progress. The Absolute is finite experience at its *both* fullest *and* most intelligible

pitch; there are eternal recurrences not repetitions. The eternal history is the realisation of the "immanent and eternal victory of man over nature."[1] God becomes purely immanent in man. "The Spirit, infinite possibility overflowing into infinite actuality, has drawn, and is drawing at every moment, the cosmos out of chaos—has effected the passage from animal to human life."[2]

Bosanquet points out the fatal fallacy in all this reasoning. He says that possibilities are rooted in reality. They can derive from nowhere else; there is nothing else from which anything else can derive. The infinite whole, it seems to us, must live out alike to all its sides and aspects, must expand into and live itself out in all values, but constrict itself into history in respect of none.

In our thinking we do not look for knowledge in the psychical process but in the transcendent completion. Croce's and Gentile's repudiation of the Universe as thought (*pensato*) in favour of thinking (*pensiero pensante*) is simply a loss of vital connexion.

Transcendence, it must be remembered, is the law of the world, and as there is a sense in which every conclusion contradicts its own premisses, so there is a sense in which thought's own inherent demand can only be fulfilled beyond it.[3]

All this is as true in the realm of being as it is in the realm of knowledge, the latter is but the corollary of the former. In his *Ethical Studies* Dr Bradley says: "If humanity is adorable, it is so only because it is *not* merely the last product of terrestrial development, but because the idea of the identity of God and man is the absolute truth, because finite rational mind is not *merely* such, but, in another sense than physical or animal nature, is the self-realisation of the spirit in which all moves and lives, and so is an organic whole in that unity." Striving which constitutes the reconciliation between attainment and non-attainment, and an essential mark of finitude, whereby the spirit of man attempts to grasp perfection, cannot be so inter-

[1] Gentile, *Spirito*. [2] Croce, *Practica*, p. 179.
[3] See B. Bosanquet, *The Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy*.

preted as to make that perfection lie within the fact of striving itself, for this is just what can never have any attainment. As the goal urges to the flight, so does perfection prompt the pursuit.

In our next section, Panentheism, both immanence and transcendence will come to their fruition and consummation. How they do so these brief remarks upon pantheism and deism may have illustrated to some extent.

(*c*) *Panentheism.*

This doctrine is akin to some forms of Absolutism which will engage our attention in the following section. Perhaps it will subsequently transpire that, in our present stage of evolution, it is unsafe to pass beyond panentheism into some more definitely mystical position. As far as possible this discussion will take place on the intellectual plane, rather than on the mystical. The spirit's final relation to the Absolute, to God, is surely a mystical one, not expressible in terms of the intellect at all; yet we reserve the treatment of this most difficult problem to a later section.

Krause and Baader, who made use of the word 'panentheism,' employed it to denote the synthesis of transcendence and immanence. God, they felt, was greater than all, yet all derived its entire dependence from Him. Both the theories of pure immanence and pure transcendence revealed themselves as abstractions; it became impossible to think either alternative through without contradiction; a refuge from such a dilemma was imperative, and the asylum was found in panentheism. "In Him we live and move and have our being"; this is the religious side of our philosophical doctrine; it admits God to be both the context and the content of our life, He is the ever-present atmosphere, the ever-active life and energy of our being. God is *over* us as well as *in* us, and these are complementary. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-Begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." Here again there is no confusion between God as He appears in the Logos, and God in His transcendence as Father. There is an increasing immanence of God in the world yet no identity

therewith. Never is there any union of the 'Word' with the world, the perfect with the imperfect expression of God. As Dr Martineau has said: "the Eternal is greater than all He has done." Therefore God, as He, "of Whom are all things," must be distinguished from God, "through Whom are all things."[1]

"The apprehension of God as Transcendent is, however, indirect and implicit, immensely operative in the dynamism of man's multiform deepest life—for it is this apprehension that ever leaves in man, at his best moments, the poignant sense of inadequacy and that dwarfs him before that most real sense or touch of the Infinite."[2]

Here the true relationship appears between God and man. The high and holy One inhabiting Eternity, He Whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, condescends to dwell with those of a humble heart. Holiness and humility have met together, goodness and graciousness have kissed each other. The voice of the Eternal re-echoes the voice within the heart, the divine in the all beats in harmony with the divine within the all. Nature and man, history and religion, philosophy and science become the luminous dwelling-place of God, the Absolute One.

From an intellectual standpoint panentheism may appear to be but another variation of the multitude of philosophical positions capable of being held with regard to God's relation to His world. From time to time the philosophic spirit, urged by an innate dialectic, the aspiration to grasp the True, may rehabilitate all these outworn garments, long ago discarded, and thereby endow them for the period with a temporary life; but as a lasting and satisfying tabernacle wherein the spirit of man, ever harassed by a noble discontent, can rest, this they can never be.

Whether any theory of the Absolute has yet made its appearance that can claim to have at all adequately synthesised Immanence and Transcendence, it will be our duty to ask later. Ambition is often the foe of truth, and to strive after the greater, that which we may be necessitated to pronounce as impossible

[1] See W. L. Walker, *The Spirit and the Incarnation.* [2] Baron von Hügel.

of attainment at our present level of development, may result in our grasping only the less.

Some philosophy of the *Absolute*, it seems to me, is our sole refuge from the paradox of these apparently antithetic terms, Immanence and Transcendence, but can man as finite and bound by conditions of finitude, ever arrive at any real solution of the problem? Faith, religious faith, does not get beyond the contrast when it expresses itself in intellectual terms; faith itself is the manward side of that real act which has for its divine side grace. The intellect moves in the region of antitheses, beyond which region it is suffused with intuition or pure vision.

Panentheism maintains with Professor J. Royce that "Simple unity is a mere impossibility. God cannot be One except by being many. Nor can we various selves be many unless in Him we are One."[1] This, Royce says, is the deepest truth that religion has been seeking to teach mankind.

Extremely interesting and helpful are Dr Inge's remarks in his Gifford Lectures on Plotinus in our present connexion.

They illustrate the elusiveness that underlies the complex relationships between God and the world, between Being and beings.

He says, for Plotinus, "the One is the source from which the differentiation of unity and plurality proceeds; it is the transcendence of separability rather than the negation of plurality."[2] "When we call the Absolute One, we intend thereby only to exclude the notion of discerptibility."[3]

Eckhart, again, distinguishes between the Godhead and God. The Godhead is not Being, but the eternal potentiality of Being, containing within Himself all distinctions as yet undeveloped. "All things in God are one thing." To raise God above all Being and Life is for His greater glory, it is rather to honour Being in Him than to deprive Him of Being.[4]

Plotinus, he thinks, avoids to a greater degree the confusion

[1] See J. Royce, *The World and the Individual*.
[2,3] *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, vol. II.
[4] See W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, vol. II.

of God with His creation, although Eckhart is far from the Hegelian mistake of so nearly identifying God with the evolution of man's self-consciousness. When Eckhart affirms that "He is God naturally, but not from nature; willingly, but not from will,"[1] he more nearly approaches Plotinus. This guards against the mistake of importing any *necessity* into God's nature; He is the eternal ground of everything, so that external constraint, though not Spinozitic determinism, is completely alien to God. The Unconditioned must, after all, be untrammelled by conditions; He must, by the might of infinite intellectual will, freely create what He wills to create, for He is Lord of all.

Plotinus is clear, as we all should be, that creation imposes no fetters upon the Absolute or God. Solitariness is possible abstractly for God, but He would have remained *hidden*, He and all Being with Him, without a world. Activity is impossible in a being which has no inner multiplicity unless it acts on another.[2] Would Hegel have maintained, as Dr Inge suggests, that the One would have been hidden *from itself* without a world? The answer depends upon the relation of the logical and temporal dialectic; is the former the ground and animating cause of the latter? This would seem so in passages where Hegel states that the whole process of development is an illusion whereby the end appears to be as yet unaccomplished; but we may not shut our eyes to those in which, by his triadic movements, he makes Absolute Spirit the final synthesis of Absolute Idea, or pure ideality, the Kingdom of the Father, and Nature, or pure particularity, the Kingdom of the Son. Are we to understand that there is an identity between Absolute Spirit and the Holy Spirit of Christian theology? There is no decisive response, no unanimity of voices upon this all-important conclusion. If the majority of Hegelians are right when they favour an affirmative answer, there is no doubt that Hegel has misconstrued, to the extent of complete distortion, the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Those who repudiate the idea of real development of the Divine life in Hegel's philosophy, and speak instead of self-

[1, 2] See W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, vol. II.

communication, may be nearer to the Christian standpoint, but there creeps in a faint suspicion that Hegel is being accommodated to a system, a religious philosophy, in not a few points entirely foreign to his own. Dr Inge's objection to any progress in the Divine Being, an objection, moreover, that any Christian philosopher must strenuously guard against all antagonists, is that hereby the time-process seems to be made an essential factor in the life of the Absolute. Time is but the child of Eternity and resembles its parent as much as it can, said Plato; but what shall our doctrine of eternity be if time is ultimately real? In what sense then could a thousand years be as one day, and one day as a thousand years?

Long ago the scholastics introduced the term *aevum* as a mediator between time and eternity, it was made to partake of the nature of each by way of effecting a more amiable alliance. "Spiritual creatures," says T. Aquinas, "as regards their affections and intellections, are measured by time; as regards their natural being, they are measured by *aevum*; as regards their vision of glory, they participate in eternity." Dare we say that according to Plotinus, in the atmosphere of the soul-world, we see all things in time, in that of the spirit-world, the world of *νοῦς*, *νόησις*, and *νοητά*, we see all things in *aevum*, but in that of the Absolute, eternity alone forms a fitting context? In this last, indeed, all vision, as such, has been transcended, even the highest conceivable intuition vanishes in the absolute unity of seer and seen.

Our study of Panentheism seems to have conducted us to the borders both of Absolutism and Mysticism. This, we think, is its true function. It is well-nigh impossible to remain upon the intellectual plane of thought for long when the synthesis of Transcendence and Immanence is being constructed. To resign either side of the problem is to abandon it *in toto*, and the inevitable consequence is either some form of pantheism or some form of deism, however much each of these may differ from orthodox positions. It rests, therefore, for us to pass on to a brief synopsis of some of the absolutist theories in the hope that more satisfactory results may be reached, which are unattain-

able upon lower levels of thought, such as have formed the subject of discussion up to the present.

(*d*) *Absolutism.*

Theories of the Absolute involve, beyond all other philosophical problems, the greatest amount of judicious handling and careful concentration of thought in order to arrive at any sort of understanding as to their relative merits and demerits. The future will, I am persuaded, show a greater proportion of philosophical 'Absolutes' than history records that the past has done. This is a fact we may welcome—especially will those do so who think that some sort of 'Absolute' must necessarily be the conclusion to thought's long journey.

The whole subject of Absolutism lends itself to a somewhat simple division. For the present purpose it must suffice to examine very briefly those theories which may be called Christian and those which will only admit some kind of 'God of evolution.' Perhaps this latter class are in the ascendancy, since a universe which develops, or comes to self-realisation, knows no limit to the multitude of interpretations that can be placed upon it.

It will be assumed, therefore, that for religion at any rate, any phase of doctrine that goes by the name of Absolute, should it admit that the ultimate reality in any way lacks something it ought to possess and is on the way to possessing it, cannot be termed Christian.

God's completeness, perfection, both metaphysical and moral, and unconditionedness are essential and vital conceptions; "In Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning"; aspiration after a better may presuppose such a fundamental changelessness, the lot of man is to have "something to cast off, something to become," and this may allow sufficient latitude for evolutionary theories.

At the present day no one may neglect the writings of the two Absolutist thinkers, Dr Bradley and Dr Bosanquet. In the essay of Dr Bradley on *Appearance and Reality*, may we venture to say that the Absolute seems to be that which is free from relations? There is a region before man began to think when he

was free from relation, and there is one after all thinking has been transcended when he is similarly free. The former is the infra-relational, the latter the supra-relational state. Just as the infra-relational is free from relations, which are as yet implicit in pure feeling, so mystic intuition has come to our relief in the non-relational zone, and has, in rendering all relations explicit, absorbed them into itself. Between these two extremes we encounter the 'that' and the 'what' and therewith relations innumerable. *Thinking* is necessarily bound by relations, for it is a relational process and has its very life in and through them. On the disappearance of the subject-object relation, which is ultimate for thought, thought itself disappears and with it all relational reality.

If we are left to conjecture what the *nature* of this absolute may be, yet it is undoubted that some such goal as Dr Bradley assumes must be the Absolute for *thought*. The very definition of any absolute involves freedom from all relations whatever, yet this is rather a negative than a positive position. The final resting-place of *knowledge* is *less than* the resting-place of *being*; abstract premisses lead to abstract conclusions, yet their function is to demonstrate the apodeictic necessity of the Absolute; the other parts of reality, the realms of the Good and the Beautiful, form the rich and varied *content* of the Absolute. Without the True, the Absolute would be blind, but with True *alone* it would be empty.

Dr Bosanquet lays stress upon the supreme Personality or Individuality, and tends to make men aspects of His life. We are eternal elements in the Divine Being, he says. His discussion of our immortality shows that the destiny of the finite self, as conceived by Western thought, has erred as much on the one side, as Eastern thought has erred on the other. So far from it being the case that our individuality, our selfhood, is preserved and respected in the Absolute, the truth is rather that the Absolute is our *Truth*, as Hegel would have said. All that we can become, He is. God all in all is indeed the truth, and it is a subordinate question what exactly the relation must be, if there is any relation, between the finite and the infinite. Our need

for God becomes God's need for us; not "Give us what we want," but "Thy will be done."

When we pass to the East, we find that the Absolute is becoming more mystical. There is an approximation to the great Christian mystics in the doctrine of Buddha. Language seems to be quite out of court; paradox that borders on contradiction clothes all the ultimate problems of the universe. Logical precision and analytic conceptions give place to the immediate utterance of mystic intuition. Throughout appeal is made to direct experience, in the words of Plotinus, "he who has seen it knows what I say."

The unconditioned, says Buddha, is raised above all being and non-being; we no longer move under the guidance of the law of 'excluded middle.' Nirvana is reached neither by those who deny nor by those who affirm that 'being' has reality, that being belongs to the One. Both these are one-sided extremes, which are synthesised only on the dawn of the transcendent.

In our consideration of oriental philosophy later, it will be possible to treat of these and such doctrines more fully, yet the vastness and profundity of the subject will preclude all but a brief survey of theories which, up to the present time, the West has very imperfectly made its own.

In Europe the Absolute has become a synonym for certain fundamental positions towards the universe that are entirely heterogeneous. He, or rather It, has been equated with the totality of men; the community of spirits, eternal *a parte ante* as well as *a parte post*; the eternal self-consciousness that realised itself progressively in organisms, which process results in the appearance of finite beings; and once again as the immanent ideal in every man.

Many are the schools that have arisen in defence of the rights of a real independence of the finite as against the all-absorbing Absolute which threatens to engulf the whole in the infinite abyss of its nature. With one accord they revolt against any doctrine that would merge our longing, our desires, and our hopes, in a blank, impersonal and abstract void. The Absolute, if it is to justify its claims, must be One in whom our longings

are satisfied, our desires find their desideratum, and our hopes their fulfilment. It must be One with whom the spirit of man can come into communion, One who is at once good, true and just as well as merciful and forgiving, One who draws a distinction between the 'is' and the 'ought to be,' between the evil and the good, the actual and the ideal state, in the world. Of such schools and of such an outlook are the Personal Idealists, Pragmatists, and Neo-realists.

The problem of Immanence and Incarnation demands an investigation into what is, perhaps, the more critical and more vital issue than a review of well-known philosophies of the Absolute, namely the relation between the Absolute of Religion, or God, and the Absolute of Philosophy. Dr Bradley maintains in the concluding chapter of *Essays on Truth and Reality* on "God and the Absolute," that God is *not* the Absolute. The religious relation is essentially *practical* and cannot altogether satisfy; it requires a duality, a communion of personalities, while such a duality is impossible in the Absolute. Were it the fact that the sole interest of religion lay in asserting the practical relation only, then we certainly could not avoid his conclusion; but surely this is far from being the case.

The practical self-consciousness of the Absolute, of God, is the primary postulate, and the primary duty of religion, but the theoretical self-consciousness is also present, although as a moment only. Whence, we may ask, comes doctrine, dogma, creed and the like, except through the labour of the intellect striving to clothe the spiritual content, the religious experience, in intelligible terms? No doubt the labour is a never-ending, but by no means a worthless one. Inadequacy will always be the mark of translating the supra-rational into rational categories; doctrine and dogmas are the work of *διάνοια* rather than of the penetrative imagination, the higher *νοῦς*. The 'higher obvious,' if seized at all, can only be seized by an immediate vision, by something far too direct, far too intimate to be known by the 'understanding.' If we are told that the work of the understanding, the work of the intellect, can be dispensed with by the religious consciousness, we shall not deny it; but pure

theoretical self-consciousness of God is above the understanding. Διάνοια is νοῦς when it has substituted dialectic for vision; religion may very well dispense with the creed of contemplation, but νοῦς, contemplation itself, is an integral part of spiritual experience of the Absolute, or God. Of νοῦς and of νοῦς alone is it true, "he that would transcend Reason falls outside it," for νοῦς transcends διάνοια in the same way that Kant's or Hegel's 'reason' transcends their 'understanding.'

Absolutism, in *most* of its forms, is incompatible with religion. The transcendence of God is essential to worship and adoration. There can be no *necessity* of either man or the world to God, in the sense at least in which He is essential to both. This is sometimes expressed by denying that God is *exhausted* in His manifestations. God 'in Himself' is other than God in operation, God the Unconditioned is other than God as Conditioned. He has an existence of which we know little or nothing; what He is that He is quite apart from human or earthly history, the manward side of His nature is but *one* aspect of that nature; there can be no identifying the revelation, or sum total of revelations, with the Revealer. Again, there are difficulties arising from the use of spatial metaphors and categories of thought and from the ambiguous use of the term 'personality.'

In no sense are we, or is the whole material universe, 'part' of God. The thought, act or feeling of a man is not part of that man, although each is originated by him, and in each he lives and enjoys his living. As Dr Illingworth remarks, we must insist upon quality not quantity, on "spiritual intensity against material immensity"; or as it has been stated in another reference, the spiritual attributes of love and goodness are a truer index of the character of God than the so-called metaphysical attributes of omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience.

Self-consciousness has a deeper significance than the starry heavens, as it indicates a higher order of being, a greater likeness to the divine; the one is directed by conscious purpose, there is an aim, an ideal to be reached through an achievement, the other is the inane immense. Mind alone can hold up the mirror to nature, self-consciousness alone is the true microcosm, as Leibnitz taught.

The Absolute, it is said, contains self-conscious beings, but is not itself a self-conscious being, but this is to think spatially. All are agreed that It must be the most perfect unity, but are we aware of any unity higher than that of self-consciousness? Here it is left quite indeterminate what is the nature of the Absolute; we are allowed to conjecture *how* self-conscious beings *are* contained in It. Of such an Absolute Dr Moberly would remark that it was rather the *whole* than the *centre* of reality. To give it the epithet supra-personal is meaningless, since we can derive little comfort from the 'supra'—*a person*, however, it certainly is not. This he would prefer to call "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," a sort of mystical unity, in which the identity and individuality of God and all other persons are lost. And if personality is abandoned, "God may still exist for us as the keystone in the arch of knowledge, but He is no longer, except as a metaphor, 'Our Father which is in Heaven.'"[1]

Dr Moberly thinks it essential that God should be spoken of as 'He' rather than 'It,' the masculine rather than the neuter. To drop the *personality* of God, "in this consists the whole difference between a religion purified and a religion destroyed." God, we may well agree, is *personal*, but hardly *a Person*; to Him belongs the most real living centre of consciousness, but He is not One Being among many similar beings. In our endeavour to avoid the excesses of Absolutism, we must beware of falling into unworthy anthropomorphic conceptions of God. So far from being One of many persons, God is, in a sense, the Only Person, since He and He alone sustains every other being in existence; upon Him do they all depend for their life, past, present and future, in dependence upon Him consists their independence. Dr Inge has said that "the God of religion is not the Absolute, but the highest form under which the Absolute can manifest Himself to finite creatures in various stages of imperfection"; this is surely true, but so also is Professor Webb's remark, that God is *felt* to be *more* than the abstract term, the Absolute. The *abstract* Absolute may be the goal of the *intellect*,

[1] A. Moore, *Lux Mundi*. See also W. H. Moberly, "God and the Absolute" [in *Foundations*].

it may be the supreme unity after which the intellect seeks, and without which it cannot attain satisfaction, but the Absolute Dr Inge has in mind is infinitely removed from all abstractions. Against some forms of the Absolute, Professor Webb's objection would be relevant and true, but it was never meant to be urged against the reality, the supreme reality of that Absolute adumbrated throughout all the great mystics of every land. It may be doubted whether duality is ever overcome between the soul and God in popular religion, but dualism is an impossible creed for *νοῦς*. One of two courses is therefore open, either to refuse the attempt to synthesise the ultimate dualism and leave one part of our nature eternally restless, or to admit that popular religion, but *not* the religious consciousness, is only the antechamber to that ineffable union where all distinction is transcended.

As long as there remains a *future* for the word 'person,' 'personality,' or 'personal,' and there is a very long future, so long is all discussion about the personality of God somewhat vague and unsatisfactory.

Religion, or rather the spiritual consciousness, demands, firstly, that God is supra-personal, that is, *above* personality, *à fortiori* above impersonality; and secondly, that He is the Absolute.

As Dr Moberly points out, what we wish to guard by the word 'supra-personal' is God's transcendence of personality, and to deny a false conception of its nature. Theories that would interpret the 'supra' as 'infra' have to show how the higher can originate from the lower, or how the process of evolution is possible.

Both religion and philosophy demand an Absolute, the former because stability and certainty are found in nothing short of the Absolute; the latter because of its craving for unity. Anything *less* is inevitably followed by the conception of a 'twilight of the gods'; as the anthropomorphic ruler of the Greek or Latin Pantheon was dwarfed by an impersonal Fate in the background.[1]

[1] See W. H. Moberly, "God and the Absolute" [in *Foundations*].

Anthropomorphic we must necessarily be, for J. Smith was right when he said "such as men themselves are, such will God appear to them to be"; but theomorphic we shall never be unless the *Absolute*, in however dim a degree, has been revealed, enabling us to escape from the relativity into which a pure anthropomorphism of necessity leads us. While the anthropomorphic God is the creation of mythology and deification, a product rather of the imagination than the reason, the theomorphic man presupposes Incarnation and revelation. If one is due to deifying man or nature, the other humanises God; one is the result of man's aspiration, the working of the immanent ideal, the other the result of God's condescension, the revelation of the transcendent reality. "An anthropomorphic God is the only God whom men can worship, and also the God whom the modern thought finds it increasingly difficult to believe in."[1] Personality is an accommodation to our infirmity. God is infinitely more than personal, He is other than we are.

> Sound needed none,
> Nor any voice of joy: his spirit drank
> The spectacle; sensation, soul, and form,
> All melted into him; they swallowed up
> His animal being; in them did he live,
> And by them did he live; they were his life.
> . . . . . .
> No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request;
> Rapt in still communion that transcends
> The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
> His mind was a thanksgiving to the power
> That made him; it was blessedness and love.

Personality is the gateway through which all knowledge must pass. "Personality comprises all that we know of that which exists; relation to personality comprises all that we know of that which seems to exist." "The highest existence is still the highest personality; and the Source of all being reveals Himself by His name 'I am.'"[2]

Lotze maintains in his *Microcosmus* that personality means 'mutual inclusiveness' rather than 'mutual exclusiveness.' God

[1] Cotter Morison. [2] See F. Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought*.

contains *within* Himself the conditions of His own existence, there is no non-ego for Him, which is but a mark of *imperfect* personality. Perfect egohood, or selfhood, can dispense with the antithesis of subject-object, because it is the ground of both. Although not *thinkable* apart from relation, yet the ego is *experienced* as non-related in order that it may subsequently be *thinkable* in relation.

To God alone belongs perfect personality, to all finite beings but a pale copy thereof is allotted.

Such is Lotze's contention: it is one that accords equally with the religious and the philosophical consciousness, but the problem of the supra-personal is by no means solved. Our point of departure in any discussion on God's personality is, on Lotze's terms, that of the 'pale copy,' and in contrast to this God must appear as supra-personal.

The Absolute, we must admit, is something bigger and wider than any so-called personal or quasi-personal God, something more like Swinburne's *Hertha*,

> I am that which began;
> Out of me the years roll;
> Out of me God and man;
> I am equal and whole.

God changes, and man, and the form of them bodily; I am the soul.[1]

God's being is all-comprehensive, but not destructive of what it comprehends. He embraces All, but does not identify all with Himself. The activity of finite spirits is "included in what He *has* caused; excepted from what He *is causing*." Self-limitation is an expression of perfection. But He transcends His own act of limitation.[2] Hegel would have called the limitless, the abstract and worthless infinite; the true Absolute is the synthesis of the infinite and the finite.

The whole development of creation must be wrought out *in* God as Absolute, as the all-transcending, all-embracing One, or 'the Father.' The ideal of creation is 'the Son,' and in every

[1] See W. H. Moberly, *Foundations*.
[2] See F. Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought*.

self-communication there is self-diremption in God—God as He is in His love for ever arises to Himself and for ever passes out into the Creation to realise the life of Sonship therein.

God as willed by Himself, thus proceeding from Himself, depending on Himself, and existing for Himself, as the realisation of the perfectly good, is God as 'Son'—not God absolutely, but God as eternally willed by God—'God of God.'[1]

All arbitrariness and likewise all necessity in God must be avoided. Hegel says that to think that God might have revealed Himself, or He might not, is to import accidentality into the divine nature. God as Spirit is essentially this very self-revelation, it is something that belongs to the notion of God. He does not create the world once for all, but He is the eternal Creator, this eternal self-revelation, this *actus*. This is His essential characteristic.[2]

He departs from Christian doctrine in maintaining that "the Divine nature itself is merely something which is to be Absolute Spirit, and thus it is just the unity of divine and human natures which is itself the Absolute Spirit." Spirit is the living Process by which the implicit unity of the divine and human natures becomes actual and comes to have a definite existence.

The divine history in its first form takes place outside finitude, representing God as He is in His essential being, or in-and-for Himself. In the second form is divine history in a real shape in the world, God in definite completed existence. The third stage is the Spiritual Community, first in the world and then raising itself up to heaven.

Spirit is the eternal Process of differentiation, positing of another, a difference, which is yet not another nor a different, and abolishing the other. In its perfect form the 'Other' is the σοφία, wisdom, the original Man in the absolute purity of His Being, something which actually exists and is other than that first universality, that is, other than the 'Father,' or first moment in the Hegelian Trinity.

God is the Creator, and He is this in His specific character

[1] See W. L. Walker, *The Spirit and the Incarnation*.
[2] See Hegel, *Philosophy of Religion*, vols. II and III.

as the Logos, as the self-externalising, self-expressing Word, as the ὅρασις, the vision of God.

Again, he says, Spirit has the characteristic of immediacy in it. In so far as the nature of Spirit happens to be revealed in Man, the nature of God in the entire development of the Idea must be revealed, and thus this form must also be present here, and that is just the form of finitude. The Divine must appear in the form of Immediacy. This immediate presence is merely a presence of the Spiritual in that spiritual form which is the human form.[1]

Hegelians themselves are divided as to whether their master's doctrine was that 'the spiritual' is completely *synonymous* with the rational, whether rationality *exhausted* spirituality, or whether it embraced the rational as a moment, and a necessary moment.

With one of the leaders of Hegel's philosophy in England, Dr McTaggart, we venture to think that, if he *did* mean to predicate *identity* of spiritual and rational, then he has gone too far. The real *is* rational and righteous, but reality is greater than either the *True*, or the *Good*, or indeed than both together. With Lotze we urge against him the undue exaltation of the rational; the volitional and feeling factors enter into any experience, and into the sum total of all experience.

Weber maintains that "the defects of the Hegelian method and the errors of fact following from it are due to the rationalistic prejudice of which the system is the classic expression. According to Hegel, the Absolute is idea, thought, reason, and *nothing but that*; whence he concludes that the idea, or, as the School says, the *form*, is also the matter of things."

Paulsen, again, says that "the fundamental conviction that a system of absolute knowledge of reality can be produced by a new process of purely conceptional thinking, independent of experience and the empirical sciences, characterises the philosophies of Fichte, Schelling and Hegel...in Hegel speculative philosophy reaches its completion. He constructs the whole of reality out of concepts....Never before had philosophy spoken in so proud a strain."

[1] See Hegel, *op. cit.*

Such are the types of criticism raised against the 'Absolute Idealism,' that audacious flight of speculation that professed to have written the conclusion to the history of philosophy's long journey; but Lotze's remark upon Hegel's method and ideal is instructive as well as interesting. At the end of his *Logic* he asserts that one defect of that idealism was "in regarding that which can only be the ultimate goal of a knowledge approaching towards completion, as already attained or attainable." He thinks, however, the "much reviled ideal of speculative intuition to be the supreme and not wholly unattainable goal of science," and trusts "that German philosophy will always arouse itself afresh, with more of moderation and reserve, yet with no less enthusiasm, to the endeavour, not merely to calculate the course of the world, but to *understand* it."

The last class of Absolutist theories which we shall consider are those that fall under the heading 'Immanentism.' Whether these should be called theories of the *Absolute* may well be doubted, since they deny rather than attempt to synthesise the transcendent with the immanent. The ideal *within*, the *élan vital* of Bergson, is affirmed to be the absolutely real, and all extra-immanental, or supra-natural, reality is excluded *à priori* as impossible.

God becomes but the index to man's biological advance, man frames and fashions God in his own image, He changes as man changes. He decomposes but to recompose, yet there is no *reality* corresponding to the term 'God,' He is merely conceptional, ideal, an anthropomorphic creation, and nothing more.

It is all the same whether we say 'man is God,' or 'God is man.' Human experience has never been transcended. Neither Christ nor the revelation before Him has broken the eternal silence. Nothing that He did or said or suffered is more or other than the unfolding of the human consciousness, His or ours.

"The issue lies between a theocentive and an anthropocentive Christianity. The tendency is towards the latter. The religious history of mankind is natural-supernatural process. Jesus thus becomes one of a class or series. He may be the first and highest at the moment, but not necessarily *Absolute*, Final,

Unique." "He only represents a biological advance on man, just as man represents a biological advance on an animal."[1]

With certain modifications the doctrines of Dr Watson, Professor Alexander, and at one time Campbell, would seem to fall into this category. For Professor Alexander, the Absolute is space-time, while the Deity for ever about to be, is the universe as straining after the quality of actuality. God is the variable quantity projected in front of each successive level of existents, the *constant* is the space-time universe, which in its empirical constitution shares the same fate as its deity.

Immanentism inclines to *universal* Incarnation, for what could be the significance of a particular Incarnation in a single individual? The genuinely *Absolute* theories of an eternal self-realisation in finite beings looms in view, and with them pantheism is never far distant.

All religious experience is sensed as communion with an external and transcendent reality; in some sense, experience of God is not mere experience of self. No doubt immanence of God in the spirit is the presupposition and possibility of such *transcendent* communion, yet it is the immanence of the transcendent. "The truth of the immanent conception is conditional on its consummation in the transcendent," says Martineau.

Spirit is immanent, yet not *wholly* immanent in spirits, and for this reason each spirit is immanent in every other spirit; Spirit is all that Spirit is, but spirits are not all that they themselves are. Because Spirit is what it is, they *will be* what they will be, but how can we avoid the time factor? Perhaps for this reason, or better still, for the reason that there *is* a time factor at all, no identity can be predicated of the Indweller and the indwelt. God is all that we shall become as well as all that we *really* are now. Should the Absolute idealist, when he takes the form of the pure immanentist, assert that all knowledge is in *principle* immanent in the mind of man, then for him Transcendence would mean the rendering explicit of that which is as yet slumbering in potency in the subconscious.

[1] A. H. Bowman, *Christian Thought and Hindu Philosophy*.

The logical conclusion of pure immanentism is what the Vedanta philosophy has long ago presented to the world, 'I am He'; and in such a standpoint, revelation, if it implies a Revealer that transcends the recipient of revelation as well as the revelation itself, loses all the value associated with it, even were it not superfluous and self-contradictory. It is no surprise to find the Hindu saint a pure immanentist, for R. Descartes has taught us the lesson, if we were ignorant of it before, by his famous 'cogito, ergo sum,' that no transcendent conclusion can be obtained, by any possibility, from immanent premisses; what is not put in cannot be taken out; such a feat is beyond the somewhat limited powers of our logic. If our reason is unfaithful it will never rise above reasons, and if hope is hopeless it will never realise what is beyond its hopes.

(*e*) *Mysticism.*

There are few subjects about which more confusion reigns than the subject of mysticism and mystical experience. Writers whose constitution precludes them from enjoying and profiting by any states of mind that could be called mystical, consistently and persistently make it the object of a severe criticism on the sole data of the paradoxical utterances of its disciples. Theirs is an external standpoint; but of all subjects mysticism is certain to suffer unjustly at the hands of unsympathetic critics. To know mystical states of consciousness *from within* is a primary requisite to any kind of adequate appreciation of their value and authoritativeness.

There are those who maintain that, so far from the mystical 'faculty' being a rare endowment of the few, it is a universal possession by all, yet only the few make use of it. Had all Christians lived up to their belief, they would have been mystics; or, in other words, there would have been no 'mysticism.'[1] If, ultimately, we are all mystics, in that proportion in which we realise the 'faculty' within us, it would seem that, here as elsewhere, differences of degree, when they become large, very much resemble a difference in kind. From an *empirical* survey,

[1] See W. H. Moberly, *op. cit.*

there do appear to be many who have little or no sympathy with mysticism.

The true philosophy of the Absolute is the philosophy of true mysticism. Absolutism is Mysticism under the form of the *True*, while Mysticism is, in W. Watson's words,

> ...the rose
> Upon Truth's lips, the light in Wisdom's eyes.

To urge the paradoxical nature of mysticism is, perhaps, its highest praise. Behind every fundamental problem there lies a paradox, but not a contradiction; that paradox robes the deepest mysteries is but another way of saying everything 'exit in mysterium.' Problems may be regarded as so many beads on a string, the string in this instance being aspiration. We synthesise rather than solve them as aspiration progresses, they had their day and ceased to be, except in so far as they live in the present. Problems share the same fate as all other things, they "rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things."

Again, mysticism cannot be so lightly set aside as some writers appear to think. The fact that no adequate intellectual setting has been as yet given to it, is no proof that there is not a most profound philosophy underlying all mystical experiences. The warning of W. James should be borne in mind, for he says that the removal of all barriers between the individual and the Absolute, the becoming one with the Absolute, and being aware of that oneness, is the everlasting and triumphant mystical tradition, hardly altered by differences of clime or creed. "In Hinduism, in Neoplatonism, in Sufism, in Christian mysticism, in Whitmanism, we find the same recurring note, so that there is about mystical utterances an eternal unanimity which ought to make a critic stop and think, and which brings it about that the mystical classics have neither birthday nor native land. Perpetually telling of the unity of man with God, their speech antedates languages, and they do not grow old."[1]

Used loosely, mysticism is found in Wordsworth's poems, the reflections of Coleridge, the art of Turner or G. F. Watts,

[1] W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, ch. 'Mysticism.'

the music of Beethoven or Wagner, the theosophical occultism of the East and the spiritual teachings of the Johannine writings. Also in pathological states of consciousness, ecstasy, trance, dual-personality and elsewhere.[1]

Nature mysticism has its classical expression in Wordsworth, especially in the *Lines written above Tintern Abbey*; Coleridge's *Hymn before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni*; while Tennyson's *Ancient Sage* abounds in deep mystical thought, though of another nature.

Immanence, says Platt, may be regarded either as a problem or as a power. "To do all things as become those who have God dwelling in them" is to *live* the truth of immanence. We cannot agree with Baron von Hügel that *pure* mysticism and pantheism are one, and that both by similar excesses end by levelling all things *down* not *up*. "If any moment, any state, any thing is as good as another, is all engulfed in, is the complete vehicle of, eternity—then good and evil, true and false, God and world, God and man, spirit and sense coalesce."[2] The religious experience of the mystic speaks rather in the tones of Dr Clarke. God is as near to us as we are to ourselves, and yet He and us are not the same. God sustains us in life and embraces us in His presence. He *respects* our likeness to Him. He never supersedes the distinctness of our being. Rather is His personality the pledge of ours. Because He lives we live also, and shall live and be ourselves. By Real Presence Individuality is perfected.[3]

"Spiritual experience finds no incompatibility between Divine Personality and Divine Immanence. God transcends our experience for He is not exhausted by it, but He is immanent in our spiritual consciousness, and is never regarded as a purely separate and exclusive personality. As experienced God is distinct from us, and yet our experience is somehow included as a factor in the Divine Life."[4]

Christian experience is based on a 'co-consciousness'—

[1] See F. Platt, *op. cit.*
[2] See Baron von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion.*
[3] See W. N. Clarke, *The Christian Doctrine of God.* [4] Weber.

'Christ in us'; this is no mere moral unity of purpose, feeling and affection, but rather a *vital* unity; not a symbol, but a reality—a transformation, as the mystics say, of self, into Self, on the analogy of 'possession' and the truth which modern investigations into 'personality' are making clearer—that personality is not a gift, given once for all through the fact of birth, but an achievement.

The Pauline principle of co-operation with God has its complementary aspect of receptivity from God.

We cannot act without becoming material; nor use our freedom without to some extent becoming a *thing* and ceasing to be a *person*. Prayer, worship, is other than reflective conative thought, this is too purposive, active, self-distinguishing and self-preserving. Hegel was nodding when he identified *Gottesdienst* (worship) with *Denken* (thinking).

Fusion with God flows *round* our deliberate thinking rather than through it.

Apart from God's transcendent action, it is by the *nuances* and imponderabilia of spirit that we reach the heart of God; and if intellect must enter, as enter it must and should, it must be floated in on the tide of this more central relationship.

The advice to 'naught' ourselves we, as English, consider either an invitation to *Nirvana*—and there is nothing we so dread as losing our objectivity, or we consider it weak sentimentality, just because we approach our national asset of self-reliance and self-realisation largely from the side of conative intellection and volition, and so seek to apply the same methods to the self-realisation of the Cross. Love must have its polarity between particular and universal, the soul and 'over-soul.' And it is through the universal or 'whole vision' of love—in other words, through love 'beholding' the Totality of God as He is *in Himself*, irrespective of what He does for us—that the idiosyncrasies of our limited and simple selfhood and the subtle self-complacencies of our Ego are most penetratingly adjusted and purged.

No empiricism or immanence has ever yet driven out transcendence, or ever will. Man himself is a 'yonder-sided animal.'

The tide of the 'supernatural' is already dashing against our sand castles of humanism.[1]

The words of the Abbot have been quoted at some length as illustrative of the defect in *practical* worship, and therewith the necessary difficulty in coming to terms with any mystical experiences that tell of man's union with the Supreme. "God's voice is drowned in our fussy self-analysis, and the Ego of our individual relationship to Him." We have still "something to cast off, something to become," and "it doth not yet appear what we shall be"; we know that our "being's heart and home is with infinitude and only there," and the right process is not to anthropomorphise God by thrusting our imperfect personality upon Him, but to theomorphise ourselves, by the gradual process of abiding more and more in Him.

The last aspect of mysticism with which we shall concern ourselves will be a discussion of its philosophy. The subject of the essay has a more direct bearing upon this side of the vast field afforded by mysticism, consequently a more concentrated attention to the *philosophy* will not be labour spent unprofitably.

Attempts to conceive the Absolute of Mysticism have resulted in various and, in some cases, impossible positions.

An Absolute Object, an Absolute Subject, and an Absolute Self-consciousness have all competed for the Lord of all. The most interesting, however, is the Absolute that transcends subject and object, and the duality implied in consciousness.

Against the first two Absolutes it may be urged that they are but one-sided abstractions from experience. Subject and object qualify each other, and imply each other. Spinoza was in no better state than Fichte, for while the one ignored the activity and dynamic self-determination of the monads in his zeal for the One Substance, which he endowed with complete passivity, the other, having reduced the non-ego to a shadow, was unable, for this very reason, to entirely abolish it. Fichte also had no little trouble with an 'Anstoss,' whose genealogy seems to be

[1] See Abbot of Pershore, *Theology*, March 1923, art. "Meditation and Contemplation."

questionable; it performed the useful function of being a 'very present help in trouble.'

The Absolute Self-consciousness seems to have more to recommend it, but there are insuperable difficulties even here. God is here *νόησις νοήσεως*, perfect and complete in Himself; He is the unconditioned, and therefore free from all need or necessity of creation. Since He apprehends by other means than those of sense, and comprehends other than discursively, that is, intuitively or by pure *νοῦς*, and since, in this supreme instance, the Seer, the Seeing and the Seen—*νοῦς*, *νόησις* and *νοητόν*—are perfectly fused, His existence must be, as Spinoza would say, 'toto genere' different from ours.

With this form of Absolutism, a difficulty arises in the conception of creation at all. What is the distinction between transient and immanent activity on the part of the One? Of the mode and manner of externality to God, we need not be ashamed of our ignorance, yet it is not clear whether there can be *any* thing external to an Absolute Self-consciousness, an Absolute experience.

As Dr Ward points out there are two sides to 'creation,' that of 'creation out of nothing' and *ex nihilo nihil fit*—and, he continues, "we might not unfairly say that this is the side which the acosmic tendency of Absolutism inevitably emphasizes." The world of finite existence created out of nothing is nothing; that is to say, it is *Schein* not *Sein*, appearance not reality, as the Eleatics first proclaimed: it is the *Māyā* of Brahmanism, the inexplicable illusion enveloping the One, that

> ...like a dome of many-coloured glass
> Stains the white radiance of eternity.[1]

Is it possible to assert with Professor Ward that, with the first two Absolutes, this also is a similar abstraction from actual experience? His conclusion is that it "is reached by abstraction, whether we regard its contents as the intelligible world of eternal ideas or as the *identity* of subject and object in self-consciousness."

[1] See J. Ward, *The Realm of Ends*, p. 34.

The first alternative is all content but blind, the second is all form and emptiness, it has eyes but does not see. As such, no doubt, we fall into abstraction and one-sidedness, but if the 'what' and the 'that' joined hands, the Absolute self-consciousness might assume the form of a real experience, having as its experience the spiritual or intelligible world.

No objection need be raised on behalf of the neglected finite and sensible world because, in a very real sense, *as finite* and *as sensible*, it would have no existence. The coat of many colours which robes the finite would not have disappeared but been glorified; it would, as the poet says, be a white coat because the super-essential radiance has crowned it with many crowns.

There is a transcendence of subject-object in experience, and one, moreover, that need not be *barren*. "To pass beyond multiplicity to unity" does indeed "carry us on to a final simplicity beyond all explication," but does this mysticism hail "Naught as everything, and everything as Naught"? To clutch nothing instead of everything is the great error of the ' via negativa '; it "is the lion's den where all plurality disappears." Hegel was right in elucidating the contrast as well as the kinship between pure Being and Nothing; he saw that all predicates of the one were also true of the other although they were diametrically opposite. The mystics are but uttering the same truth about God's Being when they use such expressions as the following: 'God is everywhere and nowhere'; 'He both is and is not'; 'He is above substance, life and intelligence'; above the One and the many; He is

> Intra cuncta, nec inclusus,
> Extra cuncta, nec exclusus.

God, when He is regarded in the light of the Absolute Experient, may take the abstract and characterless nature of the Neutrum of Schelling, or the spiritual and mystical nature of the One of Plotinus. In the one case bare pure unity is attained, in the other still, rich unspeakable unity that belongs to Spirit and the 'things of Spirit'; the gulf is immense between a unity of repetition, a unity that is merely incessant, and a

unity of eternity, a unity in which monotony is swallowed up in life.

Such epithets applied to God as 'the absolute non-existent,' 'Nothing,' as well as Dionysius' 'super-essential, super-rational, super-personal, super-absolute unity,' are intended for His greater glory. When blinded through excess of light, the language of ecstasy is not responsible for itself, and as so often, issues in very contradictory expressions concerning the object of vision or the experience of the Absolute. As Höffding says: "In the mystical concept of God, as well as in the Buddhist concept of Nirvana, it is precisely the inexhaustible positivity which bursts through every conceptional form and turns every determination into an impossibility." If we seek for any absolute *knowledge* of the Absolute disappointment is inevitable. Oriental wisdom has long ago arrived at the conviction that, "He (soul) sees but is not seen, hears but is not heard, comprehends but is not comprehended, knows but is not known; there is none beside him that sees or hears or comprehends or knows."[1] "The ground and source of knowledge *cannot* be known; the common ground of the Good, the True and the Beautiful is beyond existence and beyond knowledge." The faith of Tennyson should be ours in the face of this insurmountable ignorance, let patience have her perfect work

> till That which knows,
> And is not known, but felt thro' what we feel
> Within ourselves is highest, shall descend
> On this half-deed, and shape it at the last
> According to the Highest in the Highest.

Knowledge being but the "swallow on the lake, that sees and stirs the surface shadow there," it does not become logic to be too dogmatic in the regions of the Absolute. Dr Bradley is quite certain that the God of religion is *not* the Absolute, but, maybe, a finite factor in the Absolute. As Dr Ward says: "Without an Absolute One it seems hopeless to attempt to account for, and hazardous to attempt to unify, the Many; and with such an Absolute it seems as hopeless to attempt to

[1] *Brihadaranyaha Upanishad.*

retain what independence and freedom the Many appear *prima facie* to possess."[1] Between the Scylla of Individualism which tends to atheism, and the Charybdis of Absolutism tending to acosmism, there seems no escape. How may these two extremes be reconciled?

There is difficulty in ridding oneself of the suspicion that these neat antitheses move within *διάνοια*, but have never attained the higher syntheses of *νοῦς*. H. Sidgwick once told us that he was puzzled as to the distinction between the contradictions which were a mark of error, and those which were supposed to be a sign of a higher truth; perhaps the professor is not the only one who has felt such an embarrassment.

Resorting, then, to the alternatives of pluralism and absolutism, the former is atheistical, and has besetting obstacles to render it in any way a satisfactory solution to the problem of the universe; the latter *need not* lead to acosmism, although in many cases this is the result. The fate of finite world and all things therein is not absorption into blank unity, it may be glorification.

Otherwise expressed, the Absolute may be the *truth*, the reality, the Alpha and Omega, of the Many. To presuppose that the ultimate nature of the Many is *known* is a fundamental error; the question to ask is not, Are the *Many* ultimate? but, What is the *nature* of the Many? Not again, Is the *One* ultimate? but, What is the *nature* of the One? A reasonable answer to the first query might be *One*, and to the second *Many*; but of the *nature* of the unity and plurality we are dependent upon many considerations. If St Paul was right in thinking that the many, the natural, must be our point of departure, then analogy, inference, intuition, intellect, all have their rôle to play, they all help to qualify and characterise the *nature* of the Absolute; logic is one, but only one, of those that offer gifts most rare to grace the dignity of the Supreme. Bosanquet speaks truly, for he says that "logic is the supreme law or nature of experience, the impulse towards unity or coherence by which every fragment yearns towards the whole to which it belongs." "The birth

[1] J. Ward, *The Realm of Ends*.

of logic is an experience which clamours for completion." Unless it is kept strictly within bounds, "lucidity and cogency is obtained at the price of *truth*."

It would be impossible to leave even a brief survey of the philosophy of mysticism without a word upon that mine of mystical truth enshrined in two chapters of Dr Inge's work on *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, entitled "The Spiritual World" and "The Absolute." To me, it is in the direction here indicated that we must look for any solution of the One and the Many. As Plotinus might say, there is no solving the paradox upon any plane below 'The One'; in the 'Soul-world' we get but adumbration of the truth, while in that of 'Spirit' there is partial *realisation*.

The general marks of the 'Spiritual-world' in contrast to the 'Soul-world' are universality, fluidity, interpenetration, and intimacy. The One *and* the Many give place to the One-Many, the unity is becoming closer and truer. Idealism is out of court here because νοῦς, or πνεῦμα, does not *create* the νοητά; materialism is likewise excluded because νοῦς is not the *product* of νοητά; they 'half create and half perceive,' being mutually reciprocal and complementary, and therefore equally real and equally essential. "Individual spirits are not *parts* of the One Spirit. They exist 'in' each other; each is the whole under a particular form. The νοητά are 'many in One and one in many and all together.' They are not separated in the slightest degree from each other; the whole Spirit lives in each centre of life."[1]

The bond that thus unites νοῦς with νοητά is νόησις, the act of vision. In a sense it is not different from either νοῦς or νοητόν, yet it *is* different. There is no *identity*, because this is a miserable reminiscence of logic, and there is no separation for the same reason. These three draw near to each other because they have each drawn near to the common centre, the conductor of the orchestra. The One induces the union, the One Whom they are presently to meet face to face abides above, giving them all that they possess, and being all that they will be, as well as all that they are now.

[1] W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*.

"Universal Spirit, enthroned above particular spirits, contains them all potentially. The Great Spirit exists in itself, and the particular spirits exist equally in themselves; they are implied in the Universal Spirit, and it in them. The Great Spirit is the totality of Spirits in actuality (ἐνεργείᾳ) and each of them potentially (δυνάμει). They are particular Spirits ἐνεργείᾳ, and the Great Spirit δυνάμει. As to the source of particular Spirits, Plotinus says that when the Great Spirit energises within itself, the result of its activity is the other Spirits, but when outside itself, Soul."[1]

If we wish to share in the life of Spirit we must rise above our psychic selves. Dr Inge says that "The Communion with the Logos Christ, and the Plotinian doctrine of Spirit, are the same. Such similes as that of the vine and its branches, and such sayings as 'abide in Me, and I in ye,' illustrate the relation of the Great Spirit to other Spirits in neo-Platonism."[2]

Spirit embraces all things eternally unchanging. "For why should it change, seeing that all is well with it? And whither should it move, when it has all things in itself? Being perfect, it can seek for no increase."[3]

Plotinus maintains that the One creates the other orders of being by being itself. In itself there is complete independence, all else depends upon It. The highest principle comprehends and embraces all others without being comprehended or embraced by any. It divides itself among them without being possessed by them. "The One is everywhere and nowhere; all things depend on it, and differ in value according as the dependence is closer or more remote."

Again, without a world, the One would be deserted and at a standstill. Inner multiplicity is essential for any activity. "All things would remain hidden, having no form in the One," if It were alone.

In the spiritual world we are not entirely free from *relation*. Since the transcendent action of the One is needed to synthesise νοῦς, νοητόν and νόησις, there is no halting-place possible short

[1, 2, 3] W. R. Inge, *op. cit.*

of the One. None of these can be reduced to a state of independence, none therefore can be absolute.

"God is above the category of relation; and therefore in the Godhead the three Persons of the Trinity are fused." The ineffable union is above and beyond existence and being, above the True, the Good and the Beautiful, which are first determinations of the Absolute, but not the Absolute itself.

The soul having traversed the world of Spirit, has yet left unexplored the shoreless waters of the One. Spiritual perception has the higher form of receptive intuition of the transcendent reality; 'the spirit in love' alone beholds 'the One'; it is rather a divine revelation than a human aspiration, it can be experienced only by those who with patience wait for it.

"Spirit flows over into Soul, unconsciously. Soul returns to Spirit consciously; and Spirit is rooted in the One. From the great deep to the great deep he goes."[1] No trace of mediation remains in the One, for anything that is entirely in itself, and not in anything else, is in the One; comprehending itself through and through, it knows even as it is known.

The triplicity that reigned in the realms of Spirit has been subordinated to the unity; there interpenetration was close though not complete, and here it is absolute. The totality of possibility of being is exhausted in the One, because the One is the whole of reality, which is co-equal with the whole of possibility. The method of ascent from possibility to actuality or reality is by way of self-transcendence to self-completion. In the One, immanence and transcendence are identical terms, so are the possible and the real, here and there, now and then;

> Some little talk awhile of Me and Thee
> There was, and then no more of Me and Thee.

If it seems necessary to enter a plea on behalf of the obscurity that surrounds the One; if our blindness is caused by the light inaccessible that streams forth from the Absolute One, this our journey's end has resemblances elsewhere. How often is not God spoken of as enveloped in mystery! "Thick darkness is

[1] W. R. Inge, *op. cit.*

round about Him; His ways are in the deep, and His footsteps are not known; how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"

Our best advice is to remember Coleridge's warning and try to understand our ignorance before we stumble at the ignorance of our understanding.

(*f*) *Orientalism.*

Should the whole tale be told of oriental wisdom, I fear that the conclusions reached would have a remarkable similarity to the One of Plotinus. The Neo-Platonist himself had studied some oriental literature, and thus the coincidence in results is not so remarkable as might have otherwise been the case. If it is possible, perhaps the religious philosophy of India, preserved in the Vedanta and Upanishads, strikes an even deeper note than Neo-Platonism; here mysticism has plunged for ever into the Silence and Abyss of Eternal Being.

An atmosphere, such as is conveyed by the following verse, may be illustrative of the appropriate setting of oriental mysticism:

> Om, Amitaya! Measure not with words
> The Immeasurable: nor sink the string of thought
> Into the Fathomless. Who asks doth err,
> Who answers, errs. Say nought!

The same profundity is reflected by one of our poets, as we shall hereafter see; he also had been imbued with Eastern knowledge and the magic charm of Eastern intuition.

Almost our sole concern in treating of orientalism will be to attempt some sort of understanding of the terms Brahman and *Ātman*. The whole of India's thought culminates in predicating *identity* of the Supreme and particular spirit, except in those systems that are avowedly atheistical. Other systems are accommodations to the empirical consciousness. Of the particular, subjective *ātman* they say it is "not a part of that, not a mode of that, but identically that Absolute Spirit of the world." The highest wisdom, the final and absolute truth, is the ability to assert our identity with Brahman.

Is predication of attribute possible to the One? Strictly no, although *sat*, *c'it* and *ananda* are sometimes spoken of as its essential attributes. Once again we encounter the paradoxical statements concerning It: Brahman (neuter) is "neither not-being nor yet-being," and "He is not as it were not-being, who knows Brahman as not-being." Of course, independence of earlier and later, inner and outer, cause and effect, characterise negatively this mysterious Being.

Resting is he and yet restless,
Afar is he, and yet so near!
He is within all,
And yet yonder outside of all.

No positive statement is possible about Brahman (neuter), *neti*, *neti*, alone is true: if Spinoza could say of his Substance "omnis determinatio est negatio" it is doubly true of Brahman or the *ātman*. This fundamental unknowableness of the Supreme principle is emphasised repeatedly: "He is incomprehensible, for he is not comprehended; indestructible, for he is not destroyed; unaffected, for nothing affects him; he is not fettered, he is not disturbed, he suffers no harm."

The seer is not born and does not die,
He does not originate from any, nor become any,
The Ancient One, from everlasting, abides everlastingly.

According to one turn of thought Brahman creates and then enters into his creation as subjective mind, *purusha*; the two forms of his being appear, the unconditioned Absolute and the conditioned One, he is

The being and the beyond,
Expressible and inexpressible,
Founded and foundationless,
Consciousness and unconsciousness,
Reality and unreality.[1]

The Trinity of Hinduism, Brahmā, Vishnu and Shiva, is subordinate to Brahman (neuter) the Absolute, the Self, in the same way that God is subordinate to the Godhead in Plotinus.

[1] See P. Deussen, *The Upanishads*.

If Brahmā (masc.) appears in the pantheon, he is a creation of the devotional spirit, and necessary for worship and communion, but not the ultimate truth of All, as expressed by the famous *tat tuam asi*.

In the same way the idealistic doctrine of the *ātman*, or the sole reality of Brahman, was suppressed in favour of the empirical consciousness for which the universe wore the appearance of reality. It was regarded either, pantheistically, as an apparition of the only real *ātman*, or theistically as a creation out of *ātman*; yet it must be continually borne in mind that these were but concessions to the apparently contradictory denial of any reality other than the *ātman*. Whatever reality belongs to the universe, it possesses by virtue of this reality being *ātman* alone.[1] Plurality, multiplicity are a mere matter of words and names, they are but a seeming, an inexplicable *māyā* that blinds the unwary. No opposition, no duality must be allowed between the supreme and the individual, this and this alone is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

No doubt this huge superstructure of the speculative intellect, this master thought of *identifying* the *infinitely* great with the infinitely small, has wandered far from actual experience. The constant obsession of a *real* world continued to haunt the greatest commentator of the Vedanta philosophy, Sankara, as well as the man in the Clapham omnibus. Hume spoke truly when he said that the market-place finds there is no very great difference between men. If the Vedantist had said the world in which most of us "live and move and have our being" was illusion; a judgment in almost equally contemptuous terms was passed upon it by Parmenides and by Plato. The one indicted it as a mere show, the other as a realm of shadows. When a fair trial is accorded to it, when the jurors take the oath with some profession of solemnity, it is seldom dismissed without a hearing; in exceptional instances permission may even be given to enter the witness-box, but its evidence is regarded with suspicion. Although all these misfortunes befall it, yet the single com-

[1] See P. Deussen, *The Religion and Philosophy of India*.

pensation seems to be that no one has ever observed it carrying out its sentence. We might be tempted at times to think that the proceedings were but a 'mock trial' if the judges were not so numerous and persistent in their verdict.

It is always hazardous to judge by appearances, no doubt, yet we may not dismiss, in such a summary manner, any claim that the empirical consciousness may have to be treated as an order of real being. India, however, has long ago determined upon such a dismissal; her fundamental philosophy, as presented to the world in the Vedanta, excludes *à priori* all *ultimate* reality to sense experience.

Phenomena as such arise solely through the ideality of a particularising mind. "When the mind is disturbed the multiplicity of things is produced; but when it is quieted it disappears." Annihilation is not of *mind* but of modes alone. Just as a sea is unruffled when the winds and other causes of disturbance which produced the waves are stilled, so the mind resembles the calmness and serenity of the sea when all external disturbances, all phenomena that produced the modes, have been annihilated.[1]

If it is true, according to this doctrine, that sense perception, sensation and the like are, in our analogy, but the waves in the ocean, surely we cannot stop here; thoughts, ideas, feelings, volitions, desires, passions and a multitude of kindred activities of the spirit are all such similar waves. In negating the external plurality of nature, we seem to be driven to negate the internal multiplicity of spirit. Reality itself is but the totality of the ripples of spirit, mere ejects of subjective minds. To most Western thinkers this will appear as an invitation to give up what they hold most dear. Even mystical thinkers may be heard to whisper 'via negativa,' the grasping of zero instead of God, the Absolute, which seems to be the error into which the Vedantists have fallen.

In the One of Plotinus the *νοητά* are transcended *not* negated, they are as equally essential to *νοῦς* as *νοῦς* is to them; realism and idealism are abstractions from concrete experience. A more

[1] See S. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*.

important point concerning the One is the *nature* of its unity. As far as we can see the plurality are not *subordinate* to the unity but entirely disappear. The One is now seen to be the truth, the reality of plurality. The advent of the Absolute One absorbs by consummating the Many; on lower planes of reality, both sides were retained because naturally reciprocal, neither could be sacrificed to the other without premature synthesis leading to vacuity of content. It is of the One and of the One alone, as it certainly is of Brahman or *ātman*, that we can say "Whose kingdom shall have no end."

The most important difference between the Greek and the Orientalist is in the divergent methods of treating externality or objectivity. The former, taking objective as seriously as subjective, evades the paradoxical *māyā*, the inexplicable illusion enveloping the mysterious being of Brahman. This has a vital influence upon the whole of the two philosophies; and those who maintain that the final term reached, in spite of its being in both cases an absolute unity, is in reality radically different, have a very strong case in their favour.

Should the query be put to Plotinus and the other great Platonists why anything exists other than the Absolute, their answer would be: Because of the *nature* of the Absolute; being what it is, things are what they are and as they are; the good knows no jealousy, or spirit's nature is to overflow. A similar question put to the Vedantist would receive the answer: Because of the *play* of the Absolute, although there is little consensus of opinion upon the point. The *ethical* moment in God, the moment of goodness, holiness and purity, is lightly regarded by the latter, with what disastrous results it is not difficult to see. "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting," so we all believe in some of our best moments, but we revolt against any likening of life to a dream; this is to make it too unreal, too arbitrary, too accidental, too irrational. "Life is real, life is earnest, and the grave is not its goal"; the Absolute, we are sure, was not in jest when He fashioned us and our habitation.

A far nobler rôle for Him is the one we believe to be the truer, that in all our afflictions He is afflicted; this is to give

suffering reality, it is to behold the scars in the hands and wound in the side of Love.

The whole outlook of the East would suggest that it is not in and through the many, the visible, that the One the invisible is to be discerned and known; it could not agree that the "invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood through the things that are made"; rather is it the case that the One, the inner, is apprehended in spite of the many, in spite of the *māyā* that blinds the wayfaring man. It is only "when to himself his form appears unreal, as do on waking all the forms he sees in dreams; when he has ceased to hear the many," that he may discern the *One*—"the inner sound which kills the outer....For then the soul will hear and will remember."[1]

This is not the general experience of Western mysticism, it prefers to rehabilitate the many-hued world, not to the detriment of the One but to its greater glory. Faith, which when strong is not curious about details, is persuaded that "ocean and air, the solid frame of earth and ocean's liquid mass" is a consummate work of art, and if we were not blinded by our eyes this would be more than a matter of faith.

When the *Christian* mystic, who is deeply tinged with the Orient, tells us of his experience, the difference is marked, for his words are both true and fine:

> For all that laugh, and all that weep,
> And all that breathe are one
> Slight ripple on the boundless deep
> That moves, and all is gone.
>
> But that one ripple on the boundless deep
> Feels that the deep is boundless, and itself
> For ever changing form, but evermore
> One with the boundless motion of the deep.[2]

Upon the background of the Vedanta philosophy all possibilities of Incarnation, in the Christian sense of that word, are as impossible as they are contradictory and superfluous. The individual *ātman* has but to *realise* its absolute identity with

[1] See H. P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*.
[2] Tennyson, *The Ancient Sage*.

Brahman, the unknown and Absolute Supreme, to *be* Brahmā. If the idea of universal incarnation is helpful, to that extent it is true, but no essential significance can be attached to a mere name. The *Avatars* of Vishnu had a reign of popularity, perhaps the success of Gautama may have been instrumental in this direction, but all such incarnations of the God were accommodations to the unlearned and the intellectually feeble. Never had the final tenet, the final truth of Brahmanism, any worthy opponent; *tat tuam asi* was the alpha and the omega of all religion, all philosophy, all life.

Bowman sees an unconscious anticipation of the Incarnation in this identity of the soul with God. Does it not speak, he asks, of the longing of the human heart to know God? "Is not this the craving for the solution of the mystery which has been revealed in Christianity? The revelation of the great truth that human nature is related to the Divine by the Incarnate Humanity of the Son of Man, Who is the Son of God, and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life."

Again, in the attempt to blend the Unknowable and Impersonal Absolute with a Personal accessible Deity, what is this but another such craving after Incarnation? The distinction remains, for the unconditioned can never be equated with the conditioned, yet the Upanishads insist upon their identity.[1] Brahmā (masc.) is Brahman (neuter) when limited to suit human conditions, no man hath seen Brahman at any time, He is the Father of Christianity, perhaps even the Godhead, while Brahmā is approachable by man, yet subordinate to the Absolute. Of the ineffable, Buddha says:

> The books teach Darkness was, at first of all,
> And Brahm, sole meditating in the Night:
> Look not for Brahm and the Beginning there!
> Nor him, nor any light.
>
> Shall any gazer see with mortal eyes,
> Or any seeker know by mortal mind;
> Veil after veil will lift—but there must be
> Veil upon veil behind.

[1] See A. H. Bowman, *Christian Thought and Hindu Philosophy*.

Man needs some kind of mediator between such a Being as here described and himself. He needs One who will be both of the nature of God and of man, One who inclines neither towards the theomorphic nor the anthropomorphic side, but is *wholly* God and *wholly* man. Such an One we believe has tabernacled amongst us in the Person of Christ. Henceforth, no interpretation of man can be adequate unless his susceptibility for God is made central, unless he is regarded theomorphically; and no interpretation of God is true unless

> Mercy has a human heart,
> Pity a human face,
> And Love, the Human form divine,
> And Peace, the human dress.

For

> All must love the human form,
> In heathen, Turk or Jew;
> Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell
> There *God* is dwelling too.

Revelation is not immanentism; the process of development, by which the anthropocentric nature of man is transformed into the theocentric, has at its basis the communication of a transcendental reality; any mere psychological evolution of man's spirit, any mere unfolding of an implicit potentiality which the word *realisation* conveys, is totally unable to stir and convince the intellect, thrill the heart, or mould and transform life. Experience of self through and through will never be experience of God, Who not only transcends self, but all selves, all external nature, all spirit and all actuality, all the things that are as well as the things that are not.

History's repeated warning is directed against the danger of any self-centredness; the tide of the supra-natural is too strong for the sand castles of finitude; the pebbles on the shore of the Infinite ocean bear unmistakable signs of their origin, perhaps also of their destiny; while in the meantime, it would be as hazardous for them to deny the ocean's power and reality over their future as it would be for man to deny the power and reality of a Transcendent Being. Our being's heart and home is with

Infinitude and only there, or, in St Augustine's words, "Our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee"; man is incurably a yonder-sided animal.

'Tis Thou, God, that *givest*, 'tis I who *receive*:
In the first is the last, in Thy will is my power to believe.
All's one gift: Thou canst grant it moreover, as prompt to my prayer
As I breathe out this breath, as I open these arms to the air.[1]

[1] R. Browning, *Saul*.

CHAPTER II

TYPES *of* IMMANENCE

We shall not be concerned in this chapter with the more fundamental problems involved in God's immanence in the universe. Our enquiry relates, not to the most adequate mode of conceiving God's presence and activity as a *whole* in the works of His hands, but to the more particular and specific question of the forms of His immanence in different things.

The larger and more ultimate enquiry might ask whether God was to be thought of as the soul of the world, the universal spirit animating all nature, the all-embracing Substance of which everything was but a differentiation, the principle of unity sustaining all phenomena, the absolute subject of consciousness wherein all things were somehow contained, the absolute experience, the world then assuming the complexion of an infinite judgment, or the Father of Spirits that indwells in a Personal form as the Lord and Giver of Life to His children. Idealism and realism, the spiritual and the sensuous, the holy and the profane, have all given their answers to these and similar questions. They have determined, each according to his own fancy, the path their feet shall follow, the way wherein each delighted to pursue his own ideal.

Our problems are not theirs, our task is of an altogether different nature, it moves upon a lower, although not less obscure plane. God sleeps in the stone, dreams in the animal and awakes in man; "there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory." In terms of immanence, God is more fully present by His activity in man than He is in the stone, more present in the sun than in the moon. The resulting glory which all possess is entirely due to His glorious immanence within.

It may be an illegitimate analogy to argue that just as various objects are of different colours on account of their absorbing the remaining colours, so each object, according to its peculiar point of view, mirrors the universe, and therewith God, from

its own particular standpoint. But so far from it being the case that being what they are, the monads possess God in varying degrees, the opposite is rather the truth, that they are what they are because God possesses them. It is not that they are anterior to God, and by some inexplicable choice or necessity chose each its own attributes, but everything is what it is because God is actively present as the essence of all. God's priority both in time and in reason, both temporally and logically, constitutes the ground and basis of all other and lesser beings; He gave to each its own body, its own form and substance, potentially at creation and progressively by evolution. All things encircle God as their centre, He does not encircle them. He has "His centre everywhere, and His circumference nowhere." Quenchless aspiration, or the hope that 'springs eternal in the human breast' is prophetic of the centres coinciding sometimes, it is a promise of reposing finally upon the breast of God; the 'arches of the years' will not form any insuperable difficulty to the footsteps of our 'Tremendous Lover.'

God, we rightly think, must be everywhere or nowhere. To entertain such an idea as that of God is to be convinced of the truth of His omnipresence. Science again has compelled us to acknowledge, in her own impersonal way, that mystery is not what we thought it was. Every atom aches with mystery and meaning; if the firmament showeth His handiwork, so does the atom, for it is a universe in itself. Supernatural interruption upon a mechanical system is not only an impossible, but an unworthy scheme; the range of mystery and miracle is enlarged a hundredfold if we approach the world, as presented to us in science, in a reverent and religious spirit. God is not to be consigned to the gaps between the knowable and the unknowable; those who place Him in this somewhat doubtful region are in difficulties when the gaps begin to close, as they certainly will do owing to the natural and inevitable advance of knowledge, the extension of the boundary from the known into the unknown. All ultimate reasons for *natural* phenomena must be sought in *final* causes; purpose, motive, end, cannot be excluded from nature if we desire to see as a *whole*, if we desire to penetrate

the deepest secrets which she keeps hidden both from the materialistic mind and the profane heart. From the scientist we expect to hear that final causes are "festal virgins dedicated to God"; the realm of second causes is the realm of science, these and these alone bear the fruits that are in accordance with her aim and purpose. But God's immanent activity cannot be delegated to such demi-gods, no altars are erected to their honour, no sacrifices are offered upon their shrines, no worshippers throng their temples.

To enquire after the final cause of a thing's being, is to enquire after the mode and manner of God's immanence in that thing. Should it be subsequently discovered that all immanence leads on to a transcendent cause, then we could conclude that it was only in God *as He is in Himself* that any abiding place could ultimately be found for all being. It would be the immanence of the transcendent, or God, as Absolute Being, so conditioning His absoluteness that determinate being arose into existence. He and none other would be the real source and fount of all things.

God comprehends all things, being alone incomprehensible; by means of the Logos, at once immanent in the world and transcendent, He informs, creates, and is present to everything. While Plato exalted his world of ideas to a sphere where they could breathe the pure thin air of real being, while they breathed human passion far above, the Stoics laid too great a stress upon immanence. But God is within all as well as without all. He is

> Intra cuncta, nec inclusus,
> Extra cuncta, nec exclusus.

Nothing can shut Him in, nor all things together, because He is greater than they are; nothing can shut Him out, because He is all that everything is, besides being all that everything is not.

Immanence may be thought of passively or actively; in the one case the tendency is to emphasise the presence, in the other the operation of God.

Intellectual and mystical natures incline to passive immanence; God is the dwelling-place of creation, and creation is the

abode of God; the purpose of each thing's being is to realise itself, to see itself as God sees it, to know as it is known. The essence of all existence, the inner side of all appearance, reveals itself as the great 'I am'; the mystical quiet, the silent stillness, the solitary meditative mood, are alone suitable atmospheres in which to realise that the heart of being is celestial rest. References abound on every side if we desired to justify this aspect of the Divine immanence. The light that floods our minds from the pages of literature is contributed by the seer, sage, saint, poet, prophet and philosopher; each and all have seen, have heard, have felt, a Presence that disturbs them with the joy of elevated thoughts.

When immanence is interpreted in terms of activity, operation, as for instance by Origen, and in later times by Leibnitz, the emphasis is invariably laid upon the *will* element in the divine nature. God is thought of as the Creator, and continuous creation His immanental activity. The form that the transcendent Being takes now is not omnipresence or omniscience, but omnipotence; He is the all-powerful One, the Almighty. He works His sovereign will in the world in spite of all opposition, the most stubborn antagonist being the freedom of the human will. Erigena harmonises these alternative standpoints by declaring that "In God is there no difference between being and doing, but are they one and the same thing? I cannot avoid this conclusion." God acts by being and is by acting, but He is *more* than all He has done. This describes God's transcendental action, but must not be confused with His creative power. Immanence is not pantheism; as we observed above, the one demands and is the complement to transcendence, the other excludes it. Eckhart's bold merging of the creature in the Creator, due, no doubt, to his profound mystical experiences, must be corrected by Tauler's saner and more sober distinction, which admits that God may be directly and immediately experienced by the soul. Yet mark the essential disparity between the majesty of the one and meanness of the other. Every event, every object and every person is symbolic of God's presence and activity; the whole realm of nature, and of mind, of non-ego and of ego, is instinct with the life and being of the Highest.

Immanence guards the truth that God's life is other than, and different from, our life; the one is unoriginated, incorruptible, eternal and unconditioned, the other reflects but a borrowed light, its nature is derived, conditioned, subordinate. While the universal manifests itself through the particular, the particular realises its true being only in and through the universal. This reciprocal interpenetration of universal and particular, of God and man, of God and His whole creation, wears the appearance rather of an organic unity than of a mechanical system. A closer analogy than that of the watchmaker and the watch would be the soul and the body. In the former case the skill, thought, purpose, and design, are immanent in the watch, but in the latter the soul is immanent in the body by its being and life. Organic unity is a truer unity than that of the mechanism, although neither is comparable to the unity of a psychic being, far less to the unity of self-consciousness, which is akin to an absolute unity.

In the organism, each member shares in the unity of the whole because each is a constituent factor in the total unity. In a sense other than spatial, the soul pervades the body, it is omnipresent therein by way of operation. Leibnitz experienced the difficulty of illustrating the mode in which the metaphysical point formed the substratum of the mathematical one; the introduction of Kantian pure intuition is the cause of the difficulty, for we seem to have encountered another absolute. Lotze remarks that all interpretations of space presuppose its existence, it surreptitiously creeps into one of the terms that were intended to explain its genesis, and so eludes all attempts to give it a deeper basis in reality.

Thousands of angels could dance upon a metaphysical point, but an equal number of men would experience an inconvenience in practising the same art upon a mathematical point.

In some obscure yet *certain* sense, therefore, the soul is immanent in the whole body, for all feelings, sensations, volitions and thoughts must be finally referred to the non-spatial consciousness, the non-temporal memory, the absolute seat of finite activity, whether affective, sensuous, conative or cognitive, before

they can claim a hearing to be anything more than meaningless and impossible.

But the soul's transcendence of the body, its organism, is as obvious as its immanence in it. Our experiences are ours because our ego lives in them, while at the same time transcending them. We are not exhausted by our experience, but shed it in our progressive advance; there is continuity and identity in and throughout all change, all difference. Without growth, change, variation or inner multiplicity, the ego or spirit would be but a dead unity, it would resemble Schelling's Neutrum in which all the characteristics of subjectivity and objectivity have vanished, not as he thought to the enhancement of the glory of the Absolute, but to its destruction. On the other hand, without identity in all change, without that persistent nucleus of being that breathes the breath of pure Godhead, we and all lesser things would be merely incessant. The life of pure matter, unalloyed with any quickening spirit, although but a fictitious creation of metaphysics, would be mere repetition, it would be an exact parallel of pure time when torn from its context of eternity. The thread of duration, and finally eternity, which binds the passing 'now' into the standing 'Now' being lacking, pure matter would exist altogether in the passing 'now'; even the word 'repetition' savours of more than pure time, since the idea of past and present is retained in it. Just as eternity and time are at opposite poles of temporality, so pure Spirit, or God, and matter are at opposite poles of *οὐσία* or actuality.

The finite spirit exists neither in eternity nor in time; its life oscillates according as to whether it is in the heavenlies, or of the earth, earthy; its vision of glory alone qualifies it for an eternal habitation, for what we are continually contemplating, that we become.

Now we have argued that the organic relation of the soul to the body is a more appropriate analogy of God's relation to the world than is the mechanical one of the watchmaker to the watch. God is immanent in the minutest fragment of matter, which Presence constitutes the *ideal* of that fragment, causing it to yearn for completion and to terminate its tireless aspiration.

The dynamic alike of the saint and the amoeba is Life and Love; each and all in their upward gaze towards the One, with a countenance of adoration and an eye of Love, desire to form a divine chorus around the Supreme. When the ideal is no longer δυνάμει, when real and ideal have met together, immanence and transcendence have kissed each other, then, in the words of Plotinus, all will be all and each will be all and the glory will be infinite; but at present our petition must be "the wages of going on and not to die"; as yet we partly are, but wholly hope to be.

The immanence of God is the basis and ground of creation; it is the germ of aspiration, of faith, hope and love; it is the seed hidden deeply within the heart of all being, giving it nourishment, life, and strength. God's transcendence is the crown and consummation of creation, it is the satisfaction of aspiration, the fulfilment of faith, hope, and love. Immanence is completed by transcendence, because these are but two aspects of one real movement within the divine life. God transcends His creation because He transcends His own immanence, but to speak of boundary lines between God as immanent and as transcendent is a confusion. Immanence is not transcendence, yet it is the Transcendent that is immanent. Analogy from finite experience will convince us that the spirit constantly transcends its own acts and thoughts. The process of objectifying mental results is the fount of a transcendent activity of spirit. In general, the whole life of spirit, as known to us, is through self-transcendence to self-completion. Spirit lies outside itself, for both immanence and transcendence are abstractions from the life of spirit, which embraces each phase of itself in every act of itself. Martineau says that God is immanent in nature but not in man, and bases his contention upon man's free will, his acts being his own, not God's. God, he says, is not the sole cause, as in nature. He transcends God, and is a centre of free ethical life. God's immanence in nature is *other* than His immanence in man, or else man would *be* what nature is, but God must be immanent in both. God's active presence *constitutes* things and persons being what they are; were He *not* manifested in some form in all things, nothing whatever could have any existence.

God is the architect in the realm of nature, the monarch in the realm of spirits, says Leibnitz, and this is due to His observation of the *moral* law in the latter case while disregarding it in the former. God is, no doubt, not the *sole* cause in the actions of free spirits, but it is not clear that He is the *sole* cause in the actions of nature. The endowment of everything with an individuality or distinctness all its own, lends beauty, charm and delicacy to inanimate and creaturely creation below man. The argument from design would be greatly simplified if this line of reasoning were adopted instead of making God the sole cause in the sphere of the non-ego. If nature could be shown her own features she might scorn her own image, and then we should be unfortunate if our expectation was not gratified in learning that she was in the process of beautifying her countenance; but no such hope may be held out by those thinkers who would assign all misfortune, misery, and meanness in nature to a bountiful, merciful, and just Providence. Once again, Dr Martineau informs us that man transcends God because of his free will; but surely this is a bold statement.

God is all man is, as well as all he is ever likely to become. The fact of being able to violate His laws and profane His blessedness, so far from being a mark of the possibility of transcending the Transcendent, is rather a sign of the possibility of falling short of His immanence. In what sense can a being enter a life both here and hereafter, whose alpha and omega is embraced in God—in what sense can he *transcend* Him? *Some* species of immanence annul freedom, but immanence is not incompatible with moral beings. Is *ethical* immanence an impossibility, or is God less present and active when a greater likeness is manifested to Himself than when a lesser one is so? It would appear that, on the contrary, He is *more* immanent in moral beings than in nature, because He has lent them a greater portion of His nature, for this is the mark of greater immanence. A confusion may easily arise if God's relation to moral beings is misapprehended. Existence for self is a truer and more real existence than existence for another, because self-consciousness is a type of being more akin to God's own life than unconscious-

ness; but there is an existence for another within existence for self, or self-consciousness, and this is a higher mode of reality than self-centredness, because the egocentric predicament has been overcome.

Again, self-consciousness spells a greater degree of divine immanence than does unconsciousness. No doubt free-will with all its attendant risks is involved in existence-for-self, but this rather indicates a greater capacity for God than an exclusion of Him.

Never is the moral being, the finite spirit, so free as when it is under absolute necessity. 'I must' is the last word of the categorical imperative, its binding power is as absolute as its authority. Hegel was right, "the truth of necessity is freedom"; or otherwise expressed, it is only when God is completely working within, only when He is immanent to the fullest capacity of the human spirit, only when receptivity is perfect, that existence for self and existence for other mutually complement and fulfil each other. Existence for other, when it is unconscious, is existence for God, but the existence is blind, the *knowledge* is lacking. Instinct, for instance, is life in which God is intimately present, but the want of an eye to see renders the process a dark and obscure one; existence for other within consciousness not only possesses the sympathy of instinct, but *knows* the significance of the act. Bergson would say that the latter may more fitly be called intuition, as it blends the immediacy of instinct with the mediation of intellect. The width, expanse, and vastness of the intellect is included in the *cognitive* element which renders it explicit and actual; in instinct all abides in potentiality. Many writers warn us against anything but a cautious use of the word 'immanence' of God. It will lead us into swift and perilous currents, they say. Many of its advocates have been carried unawares into the rapids. Not only does it raise more problems than it solves, but Christian faith itself is endangered if immanence is exalted to sole authority.

As before remarked, transcendence must always condition any use of immanence, for it may "never be relegated to the limbo of exploded theories of the relation of God and the

world"; both religion and philosophy demand the concept of immanence, as essential to their life; in Clement's words, they both "have the same God, but not in the same way." Reality is both rational and righteous, said Hegel, and if it is not both we may rest assured that it is neither. F. Platt considers that immanence is a metaphysical term. "Monistic Idealism looms ahead whenever this doctrine is pressed. The Spirit is *identified* with the All, not over or through All."[1]

Difficulties of sin, consciousness, and personality emerge, and refuse a solution along the lines of immanence. "It often becomes the 'parent of a nest of fallacies' if the moral and spiritual values are not regarded."

A study of the history of immanence must convince us that the term has, as a matter of fact, been used solely in a metaphysical sense; our criticism is directed against the *necessity* of so using it. God's immanence in creation *may* be regarded from the metaphysical point of view alone, but the import of the conception is by no means confined to its metaphysical use. Precisely the same treatment has been accorded to the Person of Christ and with no less disastrous and dangerous results. Theologians and philosophers have been much perplexed to explain how any Incarnation was *possible*; how the Unconditioned and Absolute God *could* subject Himself to human limitations; how He *could* live a conditioned and relative life upon earth. They know that it belonged, as of right, to the Supreme God to possess the attributes of omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience; yet they beheld One Who claimed identity with God asserting His inability to perform miracles, His ignorance of certain events, and His limited and particular existence upon a very limited and particular geographical area. We now perceive their mistake; they dwelt too exclusively with the *metaphysical* attributes of God, as they have been called, while neglecting the moral and spiritual ones. Goodness and love are all-important, they usher us into the immediate Presence, they reveal to us the innermost life of the Supreme.

As with Incarnation so with Immanence; but while faith for-

[1] See F. Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought*.

bids any denial of the Incarnate One, however great the mystery involved in interpretation, it has not a similar interest in the doctrine of immanence. The results are obvious, the treatment which the one has received has been denied to the other. A solution along different, or along less inadequate, lines that has met with more satisfaction in the case of Incarnation has never been given to Immanence.

The consequence is that Immanence threatens to disappear as an outworn theory, whereas it is a perfectly valid and useful concept to express that necessary relationship which subsists between God and the world. All that is necessary is to rehabilitate it in moral and spiritual terms without, on that account, belittling the *metaphysical* aspect of the same relationship.

Finding that pantheism, the night where all cows are black, bids fair to engulf us when God's immanence is pressed in the instance of His *moral* creation, we proceed to deny that God is immanent in self-conscious being; but how then shall we show that every virtue we possess, as well as every thought of holiness, is God's alone? *Moral* and spiritual immanence, which have *also* their metaphysical or ontological side, can alone guess at a solution.

Progressive immanence is a true and beautiful thought, God's perpetual self-impartation becomes more and more complete; the grand dramatisation of the Logos knows no impediments to its creative embrace; the more perfect the form of being, the more fully present and working is the divine life in nature, animal or man. The more we behold a fuller self-impartation, a fuller kenosis, on the part of God, the fuller plerosis do we also behold as a necessary complement. The fulness of Him that filleth all in all is only gradually accomplished through measureless ages; God is for ever giving of Himself to all things, to each according to its receptivity, to each according to the place it is finally destined to fill in the hierarchy of being. To interpret aright is to see God in the storm and tempest, the earthquake and volcano, as well as in the 'meanest flower that blows'; it is to see Him in the first dawn of consciousness of the child, as well as in the mystic rapture of the saint; but our

enthusiasm, our delight at such a grandeur, at such a wondrous and mighty spectacle, must not divert our attention from the context of all immanent reality. The halo of the Transcendent surrounds all things born, all things that have life; the gigantic mystery of Being enchains our reverence and compels our worship. The unexplored infinite abyss of the Transcendent is greater and vaster than the created world in which God has His immanent activity; it is more than a "mirror that reflects to proud self-love her own intelligence." Maybe it is to the *transcendent* that we must turn for the anchor of our present thoughts, the nurse, the guide, the guardian of our hearts, and soul of all our moral being. There is no acquiescence in the actual, we must ever be pressing toward the mark, for

> Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
> Is with infinitude, and only there;
> With hope it is, hope that can never die,
> Effort, and expectation, and desire,
> And something evermore about to be.[1]

The study of nature in all her moods, as well as the study of man, convinces us that God indwells within things and persons in different degrees of intensity. The immanence of God, in a most real sense, not only alters but *constitutes* the being of everything. He is the ground, the source of all actuality, to Him in the end must every thing render an account. Now observation of the general features of reality, in her varied and multitudinous hues, tells us that the orders of being, the stepping-stones from the physical mechanical body up to man, creation's final triumph, are many. The physical reveals its truth to be life; mechanics, physics, and those sciences that study inorganic matter, are abstractions, because they exclude *à priori* the mighty realms of reality that tower above physical substance. Life, the subject which biology makes its own, appears. Mechanical explanations are unable to account for life; the factor of autonomy, of spontaneity, and the consequent powers of reproduction, assimilation, and recovery from injuries, which are possessed by the living body, indicate that a different order of reality has

[1] W. Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, VI.

manifested itself. Mechanism must not be sacrificed to life, nor life to mechanism; this would be to "sacrifice wealth of content and speciality of service for the sake of symmetry and simplicity." We pass, therefore, from mechanics and biology to bio-physics, we begin our long process of synthesis, not halting at any stage until we arrive at the very highest.

Life endures for a time, but from its womb proceeds a higher form of reality, that of mind or consciousness. The animal world is the fruit of the appearance of consciousness, it is incapable of interpretation upon any lower terms than itself. Biology is supreme in its own domain, but psychology uses other categories, other concepts. As matter is to life, so life is to mind; the lower is the context, the medium, out of which the higher can emerge; the lower exists for the higher, and attains fruition in the higher; each has a partial being of its own, each exists for self to a certain degree, but as we rise in the scale of being, existence for self increases in intensity. The lower is entirely comprehended in the higher, up to the very highest, while of the highest we can only say that it is in itself, it is "self-scanned, self-centred, and self-secure."

But mind or perceptional consciousness gives birth to self-consciousness, or *man*. Here we encounter difficulties innumerable that have been the cause of perplexity to the philosopher since he began to think. Measureless aeons have elapsed ere man, the final product of nature's infinite womb, made his appearance. The owl of Minerva does not start her flight before the twilight has begun to fall, said Hegel. Philosophy, and the intellect that made speculation possible, have had infinite care, infinite patience bestowed upon their preparation. It is within the reach of all to behold the product of patience's perfect work, but the complexity of causes that have concurred to produce it, none may know, none may so much as surmise. What a vast gulf separates consciousness from self-consciousness, perceptual from conceptual consciousness, animal from man! As we trace in outline the advance beyond self-consciousness later, it will then become possible for us to conjecture what fathomless abysses of being must lie without man's purview. God-con-

sciousness, or the consciousness of the Absolute, is as yet but dimly adumbrated; an order as far above self-consciousness as this is above mind, or mind above life, is indicated by men's consciousness of the super-essential Being, of the Being of God.

Man may well be our halting-place for a time. God's immanence in him is *toto genere* different from His immanence in the lower orders; and furthermore, in this single instance, we have the advantage of being in the privileged position of studying him from within. It is only by *being* that we can truly know; and by being man we obtain a unique vantage-point from which to examine this stage in God's progressive revelation of Himself.

The human mind alone has the power of rising above itself, and of comparing itself with other selves, and with the objective continuum. Man has the power of introspection, of passing judgments upon judgments, of transcending his own knowledge, and of breaking every mould in which thought for a time has tended to crystallise. Beside intellectual transcendence, he passes moral and aesthetic judgments, judgments of worth and value, of purpose and end, upon himself and all other things. Noble discontent and dissatisfaction with his own achievements and his own ideals, both in the realms of the Good and the Beautiful, suggest a spark that is for ever disturbing his clod. Transcending all animal limitations, annulling all the thraldom of sense, he moves in a region the dynamic of whose life are the ideals of Truth, Beauty and Goodness.

His ideal of Truth, the intellectual ideal, enables him to move in a relational reality. No longer does confusion reign between fact and idea; he can discriminate the blind factual from the empty conceptual, and both from the unsubstantial fanciful and imaginative. Sciences, arts, philosophies, literatures, and a host of pursuits must follow in the wake of analytic mind. He distinguishes the universal from the particular and is profoundly convinced of their disparity, even although he knows their alliance is such that any final rupture is inconceivable. God has awakened the slumbering spark of Truth within man, and he forthwith possesses and treasures a reflex image of the Infinite intellect of the Supreme One. The hunger for the True, that characterises

his being, is satisfied with nothing short of the absolute Truth itself. Relative truth is his resting-place, for here he preens his wings for loftier and more audacious flights, but satiety with the relative must for ever be the attitude of one who has eternity set within his mind.

If the True is the ideal of the intellect of man, the Beautiful is the ideal of his affections, of his aesthetic sensibility. The myriad forms of nature in all their exquisite proportions, symmetry, and elegance, their silent faces that breathe unutterable love, charm and move him. The vaster, more profound, and terrible beauty of nature—Kant would have said the sublime rather than the beautiful—as manifested in the storm, the fierce deep, the starry heavens, speaks to him of power, mystery and awe. He beholds, and beholding admires, the Beautiful; because beauty is the spiritual making itself known sensuously through matter, and he partakes of the beauty absolute. Beauty differs from truth as appealing to the concrete intuition, to the creative and appreciative imagination, whereas truth speaks to the general conception, to the abstract universal. The Beautiful is the God beckoning in sensuous symbols; the strangeness and pain engendered by this approach is due to the imperfection of the medium to convey the meaning desired.

But man has Beauty absolute implanted within him. While he observes such a spirit of loveliness, of beauty

> Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there
> All new successions to the forms they wear;
> Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight
> To its own likeness, as each mass may bear.[1]

Yet knows with all his fellows that

> ...on our heels a fresh perfection treads,
> A power more strong in beauty, born of us
> And fated to excel us, as we pass
> In glory that old Darkness:...
> ...for 'tis the eternal law
> That first in beauty should be first in might.[2]

[1] Shelley, *Adonais*. [2] Keats, *Hyperion*, Bk II.

Lastly, and perhaps of more significance than all, is the presence of the ethical ideal, of the goodwill in our midst.

God's immanence in man as a free being cannot be mechanical, compulsive or determinative, on the contrary it must be free, by consent and contingent. "Mysteries are not morals, nor are metaphysics virtues. Might, magic, aesthetics, logical reason, and religious feeling, are insufficient unless the *good* accompanies them." Without *holiness* no man shall see the Lord, for He is "a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He." He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. His ways are not our ways, neither are His thoughts our thoughts.

The moral consciousness is not only God's deputy and vicegerent, but its sanctuary is His shrine. "The true Shechinah is man," says Chrysostom. Conscience tells of the unchangeable *purpose* and goodness of God, being infinite in variety and resourcefulness, in method and means, to execute His sovereign will. He is immutable in design and end. The final causes remain secure, they have an absolute ground; the efficient causes form the 'plastic circumstance,' and are of rich and varied content.

Now between reason, beauty, and goodness there is a close parallelism, one, moreover, that indicates the *absolute* source from which they all derive their respective being. In the last analysis the sole criterion of truth is truth itself, no *external* test can be applied such as consistency, coherency and system; truth carries its own verification, its own credentials; it need apply at no lesser tribunals for witnesses; sovereigns can do no wrong, and all trials that would pass judgment upon them have neither precedent nor authority.

Truth is monarch in her own right and by her own noble nature, and he who would set up some other dignity, of whatever pedigree, we care not, he knows not what he does.

If such an authority belongs to Truth no less an one belongs to Beauty and Goodness. They each and all speak with authority, because they constitute the three modes under which the Absolute One is manifested. Each is an absolute in its own kind; and Keats must not be interpreted philosophically in his lines:

Beauty is truth, truth Beauty,—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.[1]

The moral consciousness gives no reasons for its dictates, the 'categorical imperative' vouchsafes no explanation. Autonomy is the mark of an *absolute* command, for all ends are included within the command itself. Moral beings such as man act, or should act, not from impulsion *a tergo*, but by attraction *a fronte*; forgetting those things that are behind, he should press towards the mark for the prize of his high calling. Quenchless aspirations rather than natural antecedents rule him. He is a seer and thus

Infinite passion and the pain
Of finite hearts that yearn,

stir him with ceaseless discontent. The idea of perfection by which he knows his imperfection is ever drawing the little boat of human life towards the wider waters and the vaster ocean. 'Thou oughtest' as it sounds in the stillness of his soul's sanctuary is answered in a diapason of all his nobler powers 'I ought.'[2]

Such high instincts

Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence.[3]

The history of moral philosophy bears abundant testimony to the vast multitude of theories that have striven to explain, or explain away, the still small voice of conscience. The *good* as known to every free ethical being has been identified, now with the desirable, now with pleasure, now with the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The fundamental error into which all such theories as psychological hedonism or utilitarianism fall, is the implicit denial of the *ultimate* and *absolute* nature of the *good*. If it is always a relevant question to ask whether the desired is desirable, whether the desirable is *good*, whether

[1] *Ode on a Grecian Urn.*
[2] F. Platt, *op. cit.*
[3] Wordsworth, *Intimations of Immortality.*

pleasure or the greatest happiness of the greatest number is *good*; if these are questions which are neither meaningless nor tautological, then there can be no *identity* of the good with the desired, with pleasure, or anything else.

The whole ethical problem is simply shelved by such writers as Haeckel when he maintained that "our human nature, which has exalted itself into an image of God in an anthropistic illusion, sinks to the level of a placental mammal, which has no more value for the universe at large than the ant, the fly of a summer's day, the microscopic infusoria of the smallest bacillus."

Again, Dr Warschauer says: "If there is an eternal throne, you are on it now: there has never been a moment when you were not on it."

Ethical immanence involves a condition before realisation is in any way thinkable; it has to be acquired and cannot be thrust upon us. Receptivity of the good demands the primary condition of being fit for its reception. Our personality is always respected and not overridden. God's most precious gifts, gifts that are embalmed in the Spirit of the Giver, are conditional, never conditioned; grace is conditional on faith, revelation on receptivity, Love on love.

Man cannot "abdicate his personal prerogative, and permit his will to sleep off into a continuous automatism."[1] Moral effort is neither superfluous nor impertinent. Deliverance is not a work of supererogation. Ethical immanence is potential rather than actual, in prophecy rather than in fulfilment, a goal to be reached rather than a privilege already realised. We are not episodes in an experience greater than ourselves. It is the Fall of MAN.

"Sin is the only part of Christian theology which can be really proved," says Chesterton. The tragedy is

> Video meliora proboque,
> Deteriora sequor.

No mere ecclesiastical dogma, or oriental allegory is this, but a sad, solemn, inexorable fact.

[1] J. Martineau.

God's immanence is a consuming fire. 'All things serve.' Things good serve, and are furthered by their service; things bad serve, and are used up in their service.

No degree of ethical immanence of God in man, to whatever degree of intensity this may be raised, could accomplish an *identity* between him and God.

> The very primal thesis, plainest law,
> —Man is not God but hath God's end to serve,
> A master to obey, a course to take,
> Somewhat to cast off, somewhat to become?[1]

The *summum bonum* is to realise the *summus ego*; "the abiding satisfaction of an abiding self" (Green) needs others and Another, it involves society as well as spirituality.[2]

The moral realm can be paralleled with every other regarding the conditions of revelation. In every case the Divine in the All, in the universe, must make its appeal to the Divine in the particular. Deep must call to deep, transcendence must communicate with immanence. The tendency of morality is to emphasise the vast separation that must necessarily exist between the All Holy One and ourselves; it is in danger of lapsing into deism rather than pantheism unless *immanent* moral ideals are made the indispensable preliminary to any transcendent moral revelation:

> And were no eye in us to tell,
> Instructed by no inner sense,
> The light of Heaven from the dark of Hell,
> That light would want its evidence.[3]

"God is nigh thee, He is with thee, He is within thee," said Seneca; Epictetus discovered that he was not alone when he withdrew into himself, but kept company with "God and his 'daemon.'"

F. Platt says that "the recognition of the good as self-fulfilment leads to immanence while its acceptance as a demand of the supremely good leads to transcendence. This inherent divinity in man prepared the way for the one far-off divine event

[1] R. Browning, *A Death in the Desert*.
[2] See F. Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought*.
[3] R. Browning, *Christmas Eve and Easter Day*.

of the Incarnation. This alone rendered possible the spiritual preparation for Christianity."[1]

We should have a heightened interest to-day in the answer that he would suggest as to the locus of the moral ideal, which ideal is as yet in the stage of its infancy. "The subliminal self may be intermediary between the divine and human. It may be in this region that the soul is hid with Christ in God. Its shrine is silence; its breath is prayer; its ritual is the pledge of obedience! Here man is dimly discerned sub specie aeternitatis."[2]

This may be both true and fine, but the psychologist informs us that the subliminal consciousness is the seat, not only of the divine but of the diabolical also. By a somewhat mysterious process filtration takes place ere subconscious realities are permitted to make their appearance upon the threshold of consciousness. The besetting perplexities of the marginal region may well be handed over to the psychologist to unravel; they form a very interesting and curious study in a science that may shed much light upon some of the deepest problems of the philosophy of mind.

We have reached the stage in God's progressive immanence of Himself in creation at which man appears with all his marvellous and complex functions. We have drawn a picture of the eternal distinctions that must for ever discriminate him from the beasts that perish, indeed from every lower order of being. The subsequent evolution of man will be an evolution of the gradual appearance of God within him. Consciousness and self-consciousness are foretastes of God-consciousness, the crown and glory of all creation, the final term which will, in explaining, justify all lesser forms of the hierarchy of being.

At this level, therefore, an interlude seems advisable, on account of the recent doctrine of vitalism, that has put forth a claim to be heard by all those whose task is to delineate man's progressive advance up to the very highest. Perhaps in the lower sphere of *biology* vitalism comes into its own, but its audacious flight into realms far beyond its reach compels an enquiry as to its merits and its ability to soar into such lofty regions.

[1, 2] F. Platt, *op. cit.*

Dr Driesch, Bergson, Eucken, and Royce, all credit the doctrine of Vital Immanence with the capacity of being able to solve difficulties which it does not seem able so easily to solve. It is the wholly psychological process of the human consciousness unfolding itself, which has not the remotest likeness to the presence of a *transcendent* reality abiding within us. God as transcendent is lost to sight; no room is left for any kind of revelation; God is the permanent possibility of progress, He is ever projected as the ideal in advance of each successive stage of evolution and changes as the advance proceeds. "God cannot be reached by any reasoning process, but only by what is called vital immanence, which is to be sought for in human experience, that is to say, in a pervasive feeling of the need of the Divine, which implies the existence of the object. It is in this 'vital immanence' and not in anything external that *revelation* takes place. It cannot be associated with any phenomena of Nature or human personality."[1] Tyrrell may say that "the Catholic conception that Christ is God has no more meaning than the proposition Christ is *x*," but God is *not* the soul's experience of *itself*.

We have observed, in an earlier part of this essay, how impossible it is to acquiesce in any theory that would make God but a thought of man rather than man as a thought of God. Faith carries with it a transcendent side, hope is not self-centred, and love in its highest form is satisfied with nothing less than a Supreme Object.

We have also seen how this doctrine of Vital Immanence or Immanentism resembles Hindu Pantheism in one of its forms. The 'God of emergence' is never the God of revelation. He is never the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, but an idealistic product of man's creative imagination; He puts on immortality as we do, or rather because we do, and being a purely ideal creation is destined, in the end, to suffer the same fate as all other conceptual fancies.

"Jesus never outstepped the limits of the purely human," says Bousset; but if, as Dr Gwatkin maintains, "Christ is the

[1] A. H. Bowman, *Christian Thought and Hindu Philosophy*.

revelation of the eternal through facts of time, He cannot be treated simply as one man amongst others. Given the revelation of God, Comparative Religion may help to show us how the forces of human nature clothed it with the religion of men, but the application of Comparative Religion to the revelation itself is a fundamental error."

Christ is not simply a man, nor is He even the greatest of men. In Him we see God manifest in the flesh. Not the ascent of man, but the descent of God is central and essential. "Historical criticism has destroyed the fiction that there ever was a time in the history of the Church when it held the 'Religion of Jesus' as distinct from the 'Gospel of Christ.'"[1]

It is a mistake as well as a loss to think that the Infinite can take up its abode entirely within the finite; the contrary is the truth, for in Dr Martineau's beautiful words, "The finite is embosomed in the Infinite; and breathes a portion of His mind." If we are conscious of exile from Him "it is only that we never draw near to lift the latch of our home."

We now pass on to the later and higher developments of man, those in which he begins to assume a likeness to his divine archetype.

> All tended to mankind,
> And man produced, all had its end thus far:
> But in completed man begins anew
> A tendency to God.[2]

As God becomes more and more immanent in the works of His hand, so they begin to wear the appearance of a closer and more intimate unity, a unity within which the separate threads of man's being, although remaining distinct, yet are subordinated to the unity. This is but a result we might have easily anticipated. If Plotinus was right, if Christian theology is right, in thinking the One, the God Who is all in all, is the final resting-place, the last abode of the intellectual search for Truth, the aesthetic search for the Beautiful, and the moral struggle after the Good; then, as each nears its goal, we shall expect the three moments of the Absolute to take a subordinate place to the Absolute itself.

[1] A. Harnack. [2] R. Browning.

Self-consciousness passes, again by gradual transition, into God-consciousness, what man is in himself alone is mingled with quiet faith of what he is in God. Wordsworth describes the effect of the change in his beautiful lines:

> I see what was, and is, and will abide;
> Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide;
> The Form remains, the Function never dies;
> While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
> We men, who in our morn of youth defied
> The elements, must vanish;—be it so!
> Enough, if something from our hands have power
> To live, and act, and serve the future hour;
> And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
> Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent dower,
> We feel that we are greater than we know.[1]

Rationalism murders reality when it dissects it. "We miss the music of the stars in calculating their orbits. We find a mechanical perfection in place of spiritual beauty, cold uninspired reason in place of the vivifying light of synthesis, logic in place of life. Philosophy becomes arid and abstract, art mechanical and soulless, and ethics formal and dead."[2] The world of soul must be suffused with the world of spirit, the divine radiance that pours forth from the One through spirit must quicken the understanding—the faculty that works by dichotomy—into Reason; the aesthetic sense from admiration of the beautiful, into rapture at the perfect; the moral consciousness from its moral struggle and ceaseless effort after the good, into delight at the supremely Good, into consummated desire at the vision of pure holiness and awful purity. Wisdom must transfigure omniscience, love must be the insight of omnipotence, and righteousness the keystone of omnipresence. Presence without righteousness is mere energy, might without love mere violence, and omniscience without wisdom but intellectual perception —the reflection of things in a mirror which had the quality of being conscious of the things it reflected.[3]

[1] W. Wordsworth.

[2] S. Radhakrishnan, *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, p. 422.

[3] See A. M. Fairbairn, *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion*.

God's might, knowledge and presence are conditioned by His love, wisdom and righteousness; governing all His attributes, He is governed by none.

But man, as he abides alone within himself, has ideals of knowledge, goodness and beauty; as finite consciousness he does not realise these aspirations. His knowledge is an impulse towards totality, his love a struggle to realise the all-perfect fruition, his goodness an attempt to attain the prize of his high calling.

Man moves in the region of claims and counter-claims, he is never wholly at peace with himself and with all men; demand, struggle, attempt, may be prophetic of peace, harmony, and union, but as yet he sees in a glass darkly; he partly is but wholly hopes to be.

The Happy Isles which he wishes to touch seem far off at times, but at others the gulfs favour him and respect his desires.

But as God approaches man ever closer and closer, as He more fully reveals His Person within him, moulding him into His own image, making him a creature only fit for prayer and praise, so we notice he begins to know even as also he is known. "His knowledge aspires to be something more than knowledge, an intuitive grasp of the fundamental unity; his morality to be something more than morality, viz. religion; his self to be something more than personality, viz. the Absolute."[1] Our knowledge aims at unity, but through inherent limitation is forbidden the attainment of unity. The highest unity "from which all speech with the mind turns away, unable to reach it," cannot be grasped by intellect. "It is other than the known and above the unknown."

The pursuit of the doctrine of evolutionary immanence has conducted us to the point where immanence and transcendence are about to coalesce. The hearth of reality, that obscure region where mysticism begins to hail "nought as everything and everything as nought," looms in sight. This time the Absolute has been approached along immanental lines; and we have observed how observation *à posteriori* and internal dialectic both indicated

[1] S. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.* p. 434.

that there was no halting-place short of the Absolute upon which we might finally abide.

Let us now turn our attention briefly towards the East, and notice how very similar is the conclusion reached by the greatest idealistic system of philosophy that the world has ever been privileged to witness.

"The discussion about the nature of reality is in the form of a dialogue between father Varuna, and the son Bhrigu. The son approaches the father, entreating him to teach him the nature of reality. The father mentions the general characters or the formal aspects of the Absolute known in the Vedanta philosophy as *Brahman*. It must be something which includes everything else. It is that by which the whole universe is sustained."[1]

"That from whence those beings are born, that by which when born they live, that into which they enter at their death; try to know that. This is *Brahman*."[2] The son departs and meditates upon the problem stated by his father. Reality is identified firstly with *Annam* or matter, then with *Prana* or life; these lead him on to *Manas* or mind, consciousness, then to *Vijnana* or intellect, understanding. He perceives that even intellect breathes in a world of yes and no, antitheses innumerable come to birth in this region, but none are reconciled or transcended. Lastly *Ananda* or bliss reveals itself as the final truth of all reality: "He perceived that *Ananda* is *Brahman*; for from *Ananda* these things are born; by *Ananda* when born they live; into *Ananda* they enter at their death." "We have direct experience of this bliss or delight in philosophic contemplation, artistic worship and religious devotion." "The seer, the sage and the saint all enter into direct communion with the heart of things. In that stage self and not-self are felt to be clasped in one."

"From *Ananda* matter, life, consciousness and understanding are born, in *Ananda* they live, and to *Ananda* they return. The harmony of man and the universe, *Chit* (intelligence) and *Sat* (reality), is realised. In that moment of divine vision described in the Bhagavad Gita the whole choir of heaven and furniture of

[1] S. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.* p. 414.
[2] *Taittiriya Upanishad*, ch. III, p. 1.

earth was seen by Arjuna moving in the radiance of God."[1] This is "the light that never was on sea or land, the consecration, and the poet's dream."

To such a conclusion we have arrived in our study of God's *progressive* manifestation of Himself, of His immanence, in the creation. "Outside of *spirit* there is not, and there cannot be, *any* reality, and, the more that anything is *spiritual*, so much the more is it veritably real."

W. Wordsworth compares the murmurings of the seashell to those of the universe; and it is when we have risen to the world of *spirit* that those mysterious whispers come laden with precious truths:

> for from within were heard
> Murmurings, whereby the monitor expressed
> Mysterious union with its native sea.
> Even such a shell the universe itself
> Is to the ear of Faith; and there are times
> I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
> Authentic tidings of invisible things;
> Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;
> And central peace, subsisting at the heart
> Of endless agitation. Here you stand,
> Adore, and worship, when you know it not;
> Pious beyond the intention of your thought;
> Devout above the meaning of your will.

Hegel's noble hymn of praise to religion, which has the power of exalting us into the heavenly places, is well-known for its truth and beauty.

"All the various peoples feel that it is in the religious consciousness they possess truth, and they have always regarded religion as constituting their true dignity and the Sabbath of their life. Whatever awakens in us doubt and fear, all sorrow, all care, all the limited interests of finite life, we leave behind on the shores of time; and as from the highest peak of a mountain, far away from all definite view of what is earthly, we look down calmly upon all the limitations of the landscape and of the world, so with the spiritual eye man, lifted out of the hard

[1] S. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*

realities of this actual world, contemplates it as something having only the semblance of existence, which seen from this pure region bathed in the beams of the spiritual sun, merely reflects back its shades of colour, its varied tints and lights, softened away into eternal rest."[1]

If the word 'self' means what we mean by *God*, then we can agree with the Chandogya Upanishad: "From the Self is life, from the Self is desire, from the Self is light, from the Self are waters, from the Self are manifestation and disappearance, from the Self is food."

When we are fit to enter into God, we may make Browning's words our own:

> I knew. I felt...
> What God is—how God tastes an infinite joy
> In infinite ways—one everlasting bliss.
> From whom all being emanates, all power
> Proceeds; in whom is life for evermore,
> Yet whom existence in its lowest form
> Includes.

[1] Hegel, *Philosophy of Religion*, vol. 1, p. 3. Eng. trans.

CHAPTER III

IMMANENCE, CREATION *and* EVOLUTION

THE doctrine of God's immanence in the world has been considered in that particular and specific relation which it bears to individual objects and persons. No very great philosophic discernment is needful to perceive that each thing, each differentiation of the infinite whole, is a unique manifestation of God's presence and power. We have argued that there are degrees of immanence within the whole, a fact that accounts for the difference and variety, the varied tints and lights that together constitute the luminous dwelling-place of God. It was insufficient to acquiesce in the intermediate position that God was *in* all things, that He was but the mighty guest who condescended to take up His abode, perhaps only temporarily, within the sanctuary of created being. On the contrary, it has been maintained repeatedly that, in some very real and vital sense, His immanence *constitutes* the thing being what it is. Created being, of whatever status, owes its being to God's all-present and all-powerful activity. Dependence of the finite is consequential upon this central and ontological relationship; any independence things may have—and they have it in varying degrees—is due to their participation in the Absolute Independence of the Supreme, the Unconditioned One. Only through absolute dependence comes independence, only through the recognition of and reliance upon God's immanence within them, can all things, each according to its respective measure, grow up to the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

The problem of *types of immanence* has a very definite range, a very limited outlook; it is unconnected with the larger and vaster problems connected with God's immanence in the creation. It takes for granted many difficulties that have baffled and will always baffle the greatest minds of all ages. What the relationship may be between immanence and creation, or immanence and evolution, what the *cosmic* significance of immanence may be, it leaves entirely upon one side. In the philosophic introduction we prepared the way for these and similar

difficulties by indicating that pantheism, deism, and some forms of Absolutism, when strictly construed, exclude the whole conception of divine immanence in nature and in moral beings. All theories that either deny a transcendent reality, or affirm only a transcendent reality, clearly can admit no meaning to such a concept as immanence.

This chapter will confine itself to the discussion of the two terms *Creation* and *Evolution* and their respective relation, whether by way of contrast or affinity, to the doctrine of divine immanence. We shall, therefore, take a wider sweep than formerly; for while creation is an extra-cosmic act that transcends the created order *in toto*, evolution is the universal process of the created order *as a whole*.

Creation involves a transcendent Being; it is the term used to state how the whole universe came into being. Its origin, source, and actuality, and in consequence its character as derived, secondary, and dependent, must be indebted to One Who is above and outside of temporal and spatial existence.

Evolution, although the manner and method of finite progression, is also dependent upon some transcendent reality. Pantheism strictly interpreted is contradictory of evolution, for advance is impossible. Nor, again, is *realisation* a legitimate concept to express the activity of pure pantheism, since the transition from potentiality to actuality implies a transcendent reality within the potential, which is other than it, and effects the transition. If we *equate* the potential and actual, then the inexplicable *māyā*, that illusive shadow that haunts the alone real world of pantheism, will ever evade our grasp and our explanation. All evolutionists, except the pantheist who has to explain, or explain away, both the empirical appearance of progress as well as the logical impossibility of its denial, must admit some transcendence of the process of evolution itself. One is as true as the other, no transcendence, no creation; no transcendence, no evolution.

(*a*) *Immanence and Creation.*

Hardly a thinker that has deserved a place in the history of thought has entirely neglected the problem of creation. The battle-fields of philosophic speculation are strewn with the abandoned arguments of rival opponents, which from time to time are quickened into life by some living thinker adopting them and bringing them up-to-date. As a consequence of this popularity that the notion of creation has received, it is not surprising to find a multitude of divergent opinions and points of view respecting the manner and motive by which creation has come to be.

A brief review of these speculations will reveal to us precisely in what way and to what extent the doctrine of immanence is related to creation, according to the particular mode in which creation is respectively conceived.

In Christian theology we get a form of *ex nihilo* creation. True, in Genesis, we read that the earth was "waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," but any possibility of the 'waste and void' being a reality *independent* of God's will is repudiated. God *made* the world because He wished to make it; no external matter, no exterior force participated in creation, because there was no external matter, nor exterior force outside of God's Absoluteness. "Creation is a production of a thing according to its whole substance, nothing being presupposed, whether created or uncreated," says Aquinas. Dr Inge adds that "Christian orthodoxy denies (1) the pantheistic theory that the world is God; (2) the theory that matter is uncreated, and that creation consists in shaping it."

God created matter by a free act of His will and in *time*. Freedom excludes necessity as well as caprice or arbitrariness. He was free being determined by His own nature alone; He was free not capricious; for a being who is swayed by the play of fancy, a being who is moved by every wind of doctrine, is not free. Freedom lies between determinism and caprice, it is unmolested both from without and from within; pure freedom is the poise of pure Being, of a Being Who sees all external

conditions as conditions of His own Ego, as psychological, and all internal ones as real, ontological, and objective. 'Infinite intellectual will' is the activity of infinite spiritual nature or being. Only analysis dissects spirit into conation, affection, and intellection or cognition, to the detriment of the harmony of pure spiritual being. Pure freedom is the atmosphere of pure will; will is itself concrete freedom, or freedom when it returns to spirit. Likewise necessity, when it is but *compulsion*, is abstract external force, or has a mere physical being; when it is psychical restraint, or due to mental inability, it is also abstract, yet of a mental nature; but when necessity returns to its source in will, in spirit, it regains true freedom, because its power was the power of will, its nature, of the nature of will. Freedom, then, is the truth of necessity, it is also the truth of arbitrariness and caprice when these have relinquished their fortuitous character.

But once again Christian doctrine maintains that creation results from the *will* of God, thereby emphasising His *moral* sovereignty and *holy* energy. It is by *will* rather than by *nature* that the worlds are formed; for while the former guards His independence, the latter has a tendency to implicate and involve Him in His creation. He creates "naturally but not from nature, willingly but not from will." Subsequent discussion will reveal how divergent are the results concerning the relation of God to the world, when He is held to have created of necessity, using this word in one of its lower senses. But no theory is at all possible that does not interpret the Highest by the Highest.

The last factor, excluding the conception of *time* which will engage our attention later, that will concern us in the orthodox position of Christianity is the *ex nihilo* clause in creation. The Bible, as well as Plato and Aristotle, seems to recognise a *materia prima*, a sort of half-real, indeterminate stuff—"wholly receptive yet more or less recalcitrant"—which forms the basis of all life, but is itself uncreated. But generation is not what we mean by creation; the μὴ ὄν or receptacle of all generation, encroaches upon the Absoluteness of the Creator. Thought can never rest in duality, however vague and ethereal one of the terms of the dualism may be; and this retention of an uncreated element, if

it is not God nor absolutely dependent upon Him, must be another Absolute. If no other course were available, it would be far more satisfactory philosophically to hail the gigantic *Māyā* enshrouding the One as the final solution of the world-problem —for it is an Absolute *Monism* that has forced us into the dilemma—than be landed with two Absolutes, the *bête noire* of every philosophy worthy of the name.

According to Christianity God is alone the Absolute One, to Him alone are all things, for all things live unto Him. There is no other Absolute actual or possible; but this is rather a matter of *faith* at our present stage of progress than of explicit reason. Dr Caird asks "how God, who is absolutely complete in Himself, can yet be the source of existences which are external to Him and not included in the process of His own life." To this question theology has no ready answer. In some real sense God is the whole reality of all things; the vision of everything *sub specie aeternitatis* is the true one; but the precise bond of connexion between *natura naturans* and *natura naturata* must remain a mystery; approximation to a solution is all that has been revealed to us, perhaps it is all that we are either able or fit to receive.

Leibnitz conceived the world to be the best of all possible ones. God chose this particular world out of an infinite number of possible ones that hovered before the Divine imagination, being as yet in a state of potentiality. His choice was grounded, not upon a metaphysical or absolute necessity, but upon a *moral* necessity; being the sort of Being that He was He could not do otherwise than realise the world He did realise, which is the best possible one, because He is an 'absolutely perfect Being.' Once again we get creation resulting from the *will* of God acting under the influence of His insight and knowledge to *discern* the best possible world.

In this connexion we may profitably compare Lotze's position with regard to creation, as it forms a most fitting and incisive criticism of that of Leibnitz. He disallows this imaginative picture of the process that took place within the Divine Life prior to creation. God is the condition of both the possible and

the impossible, for Him therefore such an antithesis which seems to necessitate alternative choice is entirely illegitimate. Such images of possible worlds were never "*in themselves* possible or impossible in the same way as many combinations of our ideas, which we, being conscious of the laws of a real world independent of us, regard as being in themselves impossible, or incapable of being carried out in *that* world of reality. For God there was no reality *within which* He had to realise His creation, nor laws which, prior to Him, *of themselves* determined what was possible and what was impossible."[1] In thinking and willing *His* world God created in it that logical order in virtue of which it became possible that there should arise empty images incompatible with that world. The distinction of possible and impossible and real, is a distinction *subsequent to* the reality of the *actual* and alone *real* world. He points out that if Leibnitz were right, then there could be no conceivable motive which should have determined Him to actualise *one* out of the innumerable possible worlds that presented themselves to His conception. The underlying thought in the philosopher of the Illumination is that the *possible* is greater than the real, whereas the real is the ground of the possible as well as of the impossible.

It must be understood that there is no identity of the real with the products of will, but with the whole of Spirit, an infinitely vaster whole than the ἐνέργεια of volition. The finite mind is constantly beset with the subject-object relation which tends to intrude itself into every problem, even into those that move in a transcendent region. If thought as such 'collapses into immediacy' without the retention of this relation, then it is wise to bear in mind the pure relativity of thought, and if possible seek another principle to elucidate transcendent realities. Lotze's remarks upon creation really lead us directly into the realms of the Absolute, because in annihilating the distinction between possible and real, as well as between possible and impossible, we are in immediate contact with the Unconditioned. Ontological or metaphysical reality disappears, or rather is transcended, by the disappearance of the former dis-

[1] R. H. Lotze, *Microcosmus*, Bk IX.

tinction, while logical or possible reality is likewise transcended by the latter.

Lotze's criticism of the generally accepted view of creation as being a divine *act* rather than a divine *willing* is interesting, yet it seems to follow directly from the conception of the Absolute.

Actions imply the psychological dynamic of volition as their inner side, and also the external physical movement by which the volition is concreted into visible effort. Every action should have an eye as well as hands and feet, it spells purpose, meaning, teleology, and holds final and efficient causes in a close embrace.

But with God, says Lotze, the non-ego is lacking. He is all eye, all His acts are translatable into volitions and final causes. Being Absolute the external stimulus is supplied in an incomprehensible fashion from *within* His own Being; willing and acting flow over into each other, interpenetration is the law of the Absolute rather than externality.

Development, in so far as this involves indirect action upon material outside consciousness, or what corresponds to consciousness, is unknown to Him. Work as such belongs to the finite alone; "the divine will does not work out its results, it *is* that result; we do not impute to Him any greater vitality by describing creation as His act and not as a simple consequence of His will, for such a distinction does not exist, every act being but a consequence of volition; but if we drop all notion of mediating activity, of work, or of action that goes out of itself, and regard as equivalent divine volition and its consummations, then we can imagine the living pervasion of the creature by the Creator and boundless enjoyment by the Deity of His own activity—a self-enjoyment which we finite beings can attain to only by the roundabout path of that obliging psychological illusion to which we referred."[1]

Creation, as conceived by Christian theology and as refined upon by Leibnitz and Lotze, postulates a true Theism. God's immanence in His works is retained, not *in spite of* but *because*

[1] Lotze, *op. cit.*

of His *transcendent* act of creation. Whereas pantheism *identifies* God and creation, *Deus sive natura* (though not as Spinoza employed it), and Deism will admit only an impersonal immanence, for God is here the Unapproachable, Christian Theism held fast to the transcendent Being of God by its doctrine of *creation*; it allows, not only an impersonal immanence by way of law and influence, but one that could stir the worthy recipient of the Presence *itself*, God *Himself*, to exclaim:

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.[1]

The highest in us craves supremely for the Highest in the heavens, and spurns any lower substitute that would attempt to take His place. The measure of our receptivity is the measure of our preciousness and worth. It is a "blessed doubt" whether Spirit and spirit, the Great Spirit and the particular spirits, ever coalesce in absolute unity. We have surveyed those forms of mysticism that would whisper to us their conclusions upon this grandest and noblest of all unions.

The approach to creation, from the standpoint of mystical theology, has so many by-paths, that it will only be possible to review and state very briefly the variations that the conception has undergone by those who differ in their attitude towards the ultimate One, the Absolute God. The point of departure is usually from the summit of the ascent, from the unity, that is above the world, to the plurality within the world. The key to the many and their evolution is found in the One and its devolutions. Holding securely the fundamental reality of the Absolute, conceived in many various ways, the problem now becomes how to account for the seeming reality of the many; the crux of the difficulty now arises to determine the true *nature* of the One.

An abstract substance such as the Eleatics posited as supreme leaves the creation a mystery; differentiation that must have its ground in God is impossible because it has been excluded by abstraction and apotheosis. A similar fate awaits all such

[1] Tennyson, *The Higher Pantheism*.

abstractions as absolute Subject, absolute Object, and perhaps even Absolute Self-consciousness. Those mystic writers who would transcend being and not-being, who would fitly compare the Absolute to *Nicht*, rather than *Icht*, as transcending 'Icht,' seem to be nearer the mystical goal.

But here we must beware of grasping zero instead of the All. There is a stripping off of all determination that leaves us with a blank neutrum, even if it leaves us that; and there is another and wholly different process of gradually relinquishing all determination, resulting in the super-essential Absolute beyond knowledge, existence, and bliss. Here 'omnis determinatio est negatio.' The fear of the mystical Absolute is a marked characteristic of some writers, because it seems to lead to a denial of any reality that the many appear to possess, being, as in a sense it must be, not only wholly in itself, but also wholly outside itself. The Absolute, improperly apprehended, absorbs all multiplicity without giving back to it its own proper being; but we may safely trust the realists, pluralists and pragmatists to rid us of such a monster. Surely the God of theism must be the Absolute of idealism, in that particular aspect at least in which this Absolute is all-inclusive.

Very many hindrances to the acceptation of any Absolute are caused by Him being conceived as a 'Person' resembling ourselves. If God is a *primus inter pares* rather than an *ens entium*, then not only is it quite impossible for Him to be the *Absolute*, but in what sense could we assert that He was the Creator? If we are told that to make Him Absolute is to mechanise creation, our only plea is for a correct understanding of His *nature*.

The final nature of all things, moral spirits included, is to be entirely in themselves, for in so being they are all in each other, and entirely in God. Anything that is *entirely* in *itself* is in the Absolute; its nature has been consummated not sacrificed, because this is just the goal of its nature. In the opposite direction, annihilation of a being is not to be either absolutely self-contained or to be in anything else, but to be neither in self nor in anything else. *This* 'Nicht' is the 'Nicht' of absolute darkness; the 'Nicht' of Eckhart is that of absolute darkness

through light inaccessible; it is the divine darkness of *solitary stillness* in pure Godhead.

Creation by the Absolute may be an act of self-limitation, how otherwise would it be possible to assign any reason for the presence of evil in the world? yet as frequently urged this is the only true act worthy of the Absolute. Speaking of the Incarnation, or the act in which God's self-limitation culminates, Dr Du Bose says: "It is only in Christ that God not merely manifests what He is, but in His activity and self-expression through creation *becomes* what He is....Is the act in which love becomes perfect a contradiction or a compromise of the divine nature? Is God not God or least God in the moment in which He is most Love?...where in all the story of the universe was or is love so love, or God so God?"

At the high level of thinking to which mysticism, when it is true, invariably carries us, we do not want to fall back into those 'miserable superfluities of logic,' and accept either the indeterminate or abstract infinite of inadequate apprehension, or the doctrine of a 'finite God,' so much put before our notice of recent years, as true conceptions of the *Absolute* God. We agree that 'a God who *could* not limit Himself' would not deserve the name of Absolute; but creation has made us wise to the fact that a God who *has not* limited Himself is no more deserving either of the term Absolute. Self-limitation is only another way of expressing the necessary and proper action of Spirit as it is essentially. In Hegel's words, though not in Hegel's sense, it belongs to the very *Notion* of God to limit Himself.

Now we have said that it is to the *One* we must look for the crown and completion of the creation with all the plurality involved in it. All things hold together in virtue of their participation in the One; co-existence must be interpreted as existence in and through the One, for each thing as it draws near to the one centre common to all, of necessity also draws near to everything else. The Absolute One in perceiving, creates; and in *being*, acts and wills; having no externality and not apprehending by discursive synthesis, He 'posits' and intuites by

original thesis or pure intuition. But as Dr Ward says, precisely "*how* God creates the world and thereby limits Himself we can never understand. The idea of creation, like the idea of God, we admit is altogether transcendent. Even if the idea of creation be valid, we must necessarily fail to understand the process, just because that *cannot* fall within our experience; on the other hand, any process that we could understand could not be the creative process, because it *would* fall within our experience."[1]

In our treatment of Orientalism we observed that the whole doctrine of Theism, and therewith creation, is but an accommodation to the empirical consciousness. For Brahmanism nothing really exists but the Paramatman, or the Self; realisation of this absolute identity of the individual spirit with the Absolute Spirit, of *ātman* with Brahman, dispels for ever any illusory theory connected with a transcendent God *creating* a subordinate world of real beings.

The finite processes of striving, yearning, and aspiring towards a better and finally an ultimate goal, are but the gradual realisation of this supreme relationship of identity with Brahman. If the paradoxical *māyā* never disappears, yet he who has risen to the summit of being and can predicate his union with the Absolute, possesses the key that will render null and void the eternal snare which holds the whole world in bondage to illusory being.

This most brilliant product of idealistic speculation, based as it is upon an extreme *mystical* view of the Absolute and the soul's relation to It, cannot be identified with any of our Western categories of thought or Western systems of philosophy.

In spite of Deussen, Theism seems to be repudiated as inadequate and misleading, for the *transcendence* of the Absolute is strictly denied; as usually understood Theism takes transcendence seriously by forbidding any identity of immanence and transcendence. Pantheism identifies God with existent nature, either *as a whole*, or more particularly with each part of the whole, thereby denying any progress in any part.

Perhaps the most correct term for Brahmanism is acosmism because the world as such is emphatically denied to possess any

[1] J. Ward, *The Realm of Ends*, p. 245.

reality. The reality that belongs to all existence is not the reality it has *in* Brahmā, but *as* Brahmā. The former is a true consequence of all Absolutism worthy of the name, the latter resembles pantheism because of identity, but differs from it because at no time may we predicate identity.

Mystical doctrines of creation concur in thinking that there was no point of *time* at which God *created* the world. A time before which creation was not, and after which it was, seems to be unmeaning when the action of creation is attributed to a Being *wholly* out of the temporal series. In our discussion of *continuous* creation, it will be observed that an *eternal* act forms a more fitting contrast to the divine process than a temporal one would do, although both eternal and temporal creation have their difficulties.

In our review of some mystical conceptions of creation we may notice the approach of the author of *Theologia Germanica*, Jacob Böhme, and Schleiermacher to the problem, as contrasted with that of Christian theology.

The *Theologia Germanica*, that profound, mystical, and speculative work of the Middle Ages, asks: What could we understand by a will which did not actually put forth will? And it argues from this that God must always have had a *creature* in which to offer the will an occasion for work. Will as such and by its very constitution can never be *idle*, its activity is perpetual work with God, and this involves creation, for a will that remained for ever at rest in God is not *will*. Jacob Böhme speaks almost to the same account. He says that a hidden will, one which did not realise itself in creation, and in creation as its own object, would never attain to manifestation for itself, it would slumber in realms of unconsciousness; "how can there be in a will which is nothing more than will, a knowledge of itself?" Perhaps pure will could never attain to any *knowledge* of itself in spite of realising itself in a world. Von Hartmann thinks that will is always irrational, since both in its inception as well as in its essence it is *unconscious*. The Idea alone possesses rationality, but can never by itself fashion a world. To trace further any affinity to von Hartmann in Böhme, which is in any case of the

slightest, must be unprofitable, if we can agree with Dr Ward's summary of his philosophy, for he says that "instead of *le Dieu méchant* of Manichaeism, what Hartmann gives us, as Sacrétan happily puts it, is the still greater absurdity of *un Dieu bête*."[1] So far from having synthesised Hegel's Absolute with Schopenhauer's, he has but set them over against each other in irreconcilable conflict. "The supposed *faux pas* of the Absolute is simply Hartmann's own *faux pas*; and the one like the other is its own undoing."[2]

According to Schleiermacher a God Who is outside of and beyond the world, a God Who transcends His own creation *in toto*, is but an empty phantasm. He approaches nearer to Hegel's position when he asserts that God and the world are not to be thought of separately from each other, for they are merely two aspects of the same Being, the one being apprehended in its unity the other in its plurality; and accordingly, in his *System of Doctrine*, he regards God's work as Creator as one with His work as Preserver, and the two together as identical with the totality of the causality in nature.[3]

By contrast with creation, as conceived by Christian thought, we notice in these views similarity as well as difference. Internal multiplicity within the Godhead, or a Godhead that consists of Father, Logos and Spirit, postulates completion through otherness, fulness through estrangement, plerosis through kenosis. There was never a time when the Father was ἄλογος, or 'Wordless'; the eternal Son or Word of the Father ever reposed in love ineffable upon the bosom of the Supreme God. The Trinity is a Trinity of Love, and *Love* demands a *Trinity*. If we may speak after the manner of men, God the Father would have been 'hidden' without the Word, not indeed hidden *from Himself*, for *then* what could have removed the hiddenness? but hidden in the sense that no manifestation would have been possible.

But both the *Theologia Germanica* and Böhme seem to think

[1, 2] J. Ward, *op. cit.*

[3] See O. Pfleiderer, *The Philosophy of Religion*, vol. III, p. 340. Eng. trans. A. Menzies.

that without a *world*, God's will would have remained in the realm of potentiality. This is a very different statement from the doctrine of Christian Theology, and one to which it could hardly agree. There must be no *identification* of the *world* with the *Word*. Creation takes place *of* the Father, *through* the Logos, according to Christian thought; the Word or Reason of God is the ground of the world; He was anterior to it both logically and essentially, or metaphysically; He is its perfect archetype, its ideal crown and consummation, its first and its last.

Again the Logos did not come into *being* with the world, even if we take the view that creation had no beginning in time; this would allow the mode of existence to the Logos to be but ideal in the mind of God, the consummation and perfection of the world being the consummation and perfection of the Logos. The Biblical view of creation can never be reconciled with any theory that denies or tends to deny the transcendence and completeness *in itself* of the eternal Godhead. Created being, which is synonymous with finitude, is never as *necessary* to God as He is to it; dependence upon Him constitutes its derived and limited independence; His freedom from all conditions—for He is under bondage to none of His attributes—is the cause of its freedom through conditions. No Absolutism, such as Hegel appears to have held, that makes God and man mutually complementary aspects of Absolute Spirit, the supreme synthesis of Absolute Idea and Nature, of pure universality and pure particularity, no such Absolutism as this is compatible with Christian theology. We should do well to be on our guard against all theories tending to false Absolutism, for such statements as once used by R. J. Campbell, "The whole cosmic process is one long incarnation and uprising of the being of God from itself to itself," may convey a profound truth, they may also convey a profound error.

Schleiermacher resembles Hegel in denying *transcendence* to God. In his case God is but the aspect of unity of that single absolute Being whose aspect of multiplicity constitutes the world. If the world is a progressive system, if created being *as a whole* does not maintain an equilibrium, then the unity that

synthesises by transcending the multiplicity can hardly be stable either, and in such a case it is hard to see how the Absolute Being can avoid similar fluctuations, in spite of being Absolute. In subordinating It to time and change its absoluteness is in a precarious position. It is barely consistent with the dignity of the Absolute, the ground of all reality, that it should learn by experience the lessons of time and the vicissitudes that invariably accompany it.

Absolutism, that implicates God with His creation in such a way as to deny His *Transcendence* of the created, can never come to terms with Christian Theism. God as Logos shares the transcendent and unconditioned Life of the Father, in Him perfect kenosis is completed by perfect plerosis, resulting in *unconditioned* being and fulness; but in the world God has limited or conditioned Himself through the eternal Logos. "The Logos is, as it were, in all creation, outside the world in His essence, but in all things by His power...containing the whole of all things and not contained, being wholly and in all respects within His own Father and Him only."[1]

In relation to God, the Logos is entirely immanent, in relation to *creation* He is transcendent by way of *essence*, immanent in varying degrees by way of power or spirit. Being comprehensible and comprehended by the Father and the Father by Him, He is incomprehensible and uncomprehended, because uncreate, by finite beings, whom He Himself comprehends, because created *through* Him and *by* Him whom He comprehends.

Hegel's philosophy of Religion involves him in great difficulties in the matter of *creation* by God. His original thesis of God the Father, the first moment in the Hegelian trinity, being the kingdom of pure *ideality*, he conceives to be in a state of potentiality. The second moment, which is one of pure particularity, the Kingdom of the Son, must join in union with the original thesis, thereby completing the last and final triad of reality. Hegel's method, as well as his premisses and definition of spirits' fundamental nature, leads us to the conviction that for

[1] W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, vol. I, p. 98.

him *historical* reality entered into the eternal triadic movement of Spirit, in spite of all that he said about the figurative and symbolic reality that belonged to ordinary or empirical consciousness. Again, it is not only the first person in the Kingdom of the Father, but the whole *Trinity* in that Kingdom, the realm of pure ideality, that wears the appearance of potentiality. Hegel leaves us with the dread that something must happen *in earnest* before God finally *completes* Himself in Absolute Spirit; the *play* of the Absolute must tire of dreams, for although angels sing His praises, is He not worthy of their praise? Plurality, diversity, other-being must come into its own, and this involves the whole process of nature and subjective spirit, the whole richly endowed world of time, change and evil. Exactly *how* God created the world as distinct from the *Son*, he does not inform us. His constantly reiterated assertion that such a problem could only arise for one who took the world seriously, that is who gave it a reality of its own independently of the supreme other-Being of the Son, fails to elucidate the matter. The 'other,' having in the world the form of Being, is yet merely the ἕτερον, the definite, the differentiated, the limited, the negative. The Idea is potentially present in both the Son and the world, the absolute act is implicitly the same in both cases, but only in ordinary thought are they regarded as separate and as two distinct spheres and acts. He proceeds to warn us against a vicious interpretation of this 'implicit,' as there would then arise the danger of *identifying* the Absolute other-Being of God with the world which, he informs us, is far from the truth.

His mystical conception of the relation between the ideal and the real, the Son and the world, leads him to ridicule teleology which is the result of inadequate apprehension. The whole process of the world conceived as advancing towards ends is an illusion due to inability to transcend temporal categories. Ends are beginnings, effects are causes, promises are fulfilments. Purposes, viewed *sub specie aeternitatis*, are accomplished results. This is the creed of optimism, for it implies that no failure is possible in any single instance; it may be the creed of pessimism

if it is so construed as to empty volition, effort, and interest, of all reality.

Should Hegel's dialectical development be unable to free itself from the historical one, then he would be guilty of implicating the world process in the *Being* of God. In that case Dr Inge's words are true and inevitable, "that it belongs to the *essence* of God to create, He would be imperfect without His world." While the *Theologia Germanica* regards it as a mark of indolence to be without a world, and Leibnitz a mark of *moral* imperfection, Plotinus would regard it as a lack of Perfection, and Hegel as a lack of Good. A world came into being therefore, in the first case because God is not idle, in the second because He is morally perfect, in the third because He is what He is, and in the case of Hegel because He is becoming what He ought to be.

In all the systems, except Hegel's, we have a doctrine of immanence of God in the world, because in each case God transcends His own creation; but in the instance of the Absolute Idealism, the world is an *integral factor* in the Divine Life itself. "The Hegelian view takes the world into the Absolute; for otherwise the Absolute would need something outside itself, which is a contradiction."[1] "In Biblical language God made the world 'to make His glory to be known.' But such an expression has no meaning as applied to the inner life of the One. The activity of the Absolute is purely one-sided: there is no reaction upon it."[2]

For Hegel, therefore, immanence and incarnation flow into each other, and the vital distinction that seems to exist between them disappears in an absolute identity. The divine and human natures are not implicitly different, they are both *essential* to the complete truth of Absolute Spirit. "For Hegel all reality in each thing is only in the incarnation of God. Matter is nothing else than the incarnation of God."[3] Again, "The Incarnation is identical with the Creation. To say that God is incarnate in the finite is misleading. We should rather say that the finite is the incarnation of God."[4] Christ must take His

[1, 2] W. R. Inge, *op. cit.* vol. II, p. 121.
[3, 4] J. M. E. McTaggart, *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*, ch. VII.

place along with every other man as the incarnation of God. There are degrees of incarnation, and Christ is an appropriate symbol of universal incarnation, but to make Him the sole instance thereof is to remain at the figurative or pictorial level, the level reached, according to Hegel, by religion. When we rise to the point of view of the Notion, the speculative kernel reveals itself, and the world in its totality is seen as the incarnation of God.

This brief sketch of Hegel's doctrine of creation must suffice for our present purpose. If its brevity has done injustice to his true view, then we plead the impossibility of a just appreciation of any part of his philosophy without an appreciation of the whole. His somewhat unique position as regards creation, that has no other parallel in philosophy, must be sufficient excuse for whatever damage has been done to him.

Let us, at this point, confine our attention to a philosopher of the third century whose theory of creation is far more in accordance with that of Christian theology than is the theory of Hegel. The view here held of Plotinus' philosophy is obtained chiefly from the excellent work of Dr Inge on that philosopher in his *Gifford Lectures*, 1917–1918, a work, moreover, that enables every student of philosophy to become intimately acquainted with a thinker of a highly mystical order whom none can afford to neglect.

In contrast to Hegel, Plotinus maintains "that the world was necessary for the *manifestation* of the Divine thought and will; but the necessity proceeds from God's eternal perfection, not from His supposed temporal imperfection."[1] God, being of the nature He was, was *necessitated* to create, but necessity and freedom are the same thing in God. The creation flows from the absolute fulness of the One just as light emanates from the sun. Even Hegel is found saying that the essential nature of Spirit is to manifest itself, this is its essential characteristic. Without manifestation Spirit would not be Spirit. Plato says again that 'the Good' is without envy; it is not self-centred, but must give itself to lesser being. "The One could not be alone;

[1] W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, vol. I, p. 147.

if it were, all things would remain hidden, having no form in the One." "There is a 'mysterious power' (ἄφατος δύναμις) which impels each nature to create, and go on creating down to the lowest limit of existence. Thus only can its latent qualities be unfurled (ἐξελίττεσθαι)."[1] According to Plotinus creation is the fruit of contemplation, while contemplation itself 'remains above' its own activity. The One having nothing above it contains all other principles "embracing them without dividing itself among them, and possessing them without being possessed by them." The Spirit-world proceeds directly from the One and the Soul-world from Spirit, while phenomenal existence, that which has no real being, is the product of Soul. The *manner* of the procession of these respective principles will receive our attention immediately.

"Without the phenomenal world, the spiritual world would not be ἐνεργείᾳ; it would have been hidden. If Soul's potency were unmanifested, the Soul would be non-existent (οὐκ οὖσα), not being really existent (ὄντως οὖσα)."[2] This is the general principle of all orders of existence, from the One to the Soul-world. It is not that the higher or creative principle would *lose* anything by not creating the next below it, but that it would remain in a potential form. The act of contemplation of each world, when it contemplates the world above it, results in the *creation* of the world below it, which reflects the next highest but one to itself, that is, not its creator but that which the creator itself contemplates.

"The higher does not need the lower; God does not need the world; though without it His character would have been 'hidden.' The necessity lies in the inner nature of all which derives its being from the One which is also the Good."[3] In the higher principles creative activity is one which is *outside* itself, its internal being is unaffected by creation though *constituted* by contemplation. In spite of that mysterious something in the nature of each order which impels it to create, the lower orders are manifestations or revelations of the *character* of the higher ones, not constituents of their existence. The world is

[1] W. R. Inge, *op. cit.* vol. II, p. 120. [2,3] W. R. Inge, *op. cit.*

not a *constituent* of God's existence. The 'necessity' of creation arises because God is what He is, because, in the terms of Plotinus, the One is what it is, not with Hegel that it may become what it ought to be. Neither by creating nor by not creating does the One *lose* anything, although its nature precludes the latter alternative. It is the confusion of the utterly diverse conceptions of *absoluteness* and *infinitude* that likewise confuses God and creation. "Infinitude is merely eternity with the idea of self-negation added. It cannot, therefore, in any sense be predicated of God. There is no worse, no poorer definition of the Absolute than the word infinite. God in His immanent being is to be considered as entirely outside space and time, and therefore is just as little infinite as finite."[1] Absoluteness is not constituted by the synthesis of infinite and finite, but constitutes the synthesis; being anterior to both finite and infinite, it is not only the ground of synthesis, but of analysis also. Antithesis spells but the world of appearance, which presupposes the world of real being, appearance itself being altogether a relative term.

Plotinus elsewhere expresses this 'necessity' for creation by saying that there must be a 'second nature' (δευτέρα φύσις). "If there were no necessity for each principle 'to give of its own to another,' the Good would not be the Good, Spirit would not be Spirit, and Soul would not be Soul."[2] Perhaps we should not be very far wrong in thinking that Hegel meant very much the same thing when he said that "Spirit which did not manifest itself is not Spirit," or even "without the world God would not be God." We have argued here that Hegel's 'necessity' was not Plotinus' 'necessity,' but there are passages in Hegel that would bring him nearer to Plotinus than is often supposed.

God transcends His creation by His Being, for "He is more than all He has done"; the One transcends the lower orders of being, the Spiritual-world and the Soul-world, by the essential activity of contemplation, the object of whose activity can only be the One itself; in this supreme instance it is a case of self-contemplation. But the precise process of "how God creates

[1] R. Rothe. [2] W. R. Inge, *op. cit.*

the world we can never understand"; for this we should require no less knowledge than God Himself possesses, and as yet we are not Absolute. The whole conception of *creation* is a valid one because it guards God's *transcendence* from His works.

All distinction, dependence, and subordination that characterise finite existence would tend to disappear in the all-embracing absolute self-consciousness, absolute knowledge, absolute One. In our zeal for the Absolute, whatever may be its ultimate nature, there is no mistake more disastrous than identifying the means with the end, the path with the goal, and the promise with its fulfilment. If some philosophy of the Absolute is the inevitable goal of thought, which it must be, premature synthesis only results in *false* Absolutism. "The idea of creation resting as it does upon the conception of transcendence, upon the 'ground' of all 'becoming,' brings to the foreground the importance of gaining a sound notion of the relations between transcendence and immanence." Plotinus enables us to preserve this distinction by his emphasis upon the *independence* of the One. He differs from the Mosaic view and that in the Fourth Gospel, by conceiving creation as eternal and necessary. The Biblical view makes time an essential factor and assigns the creative act rather to God's *will* than to His *nature*. Neither Plotinus nor the Christian doctrine admits any $\pi\rho\acute{\omega}\tau\eta$ $\ddot{\upsilon}\lambda\eta$, dualism is equally unthinkable in both cases.

The last theory of creation which will engage us is that of *continuous* creation. Here creation and evolution are but two terms for the same real process in the world. Creation implies a transcendent Being whose constant act sustains the world in existence and also is the ground of its never-ending progress. Evolution is the manner of the process of development itself, whatever may be the precise form it takes, without any ultimate reference to an absolute cause of the process. In the doctrine of continuous creation, evolution never should trespass beyond its territory—that is beyond being descriptive of the *mode* and *method* of the immanent teleological activity—into the deeper regions of the 'how' and 'why,' the ultimate reasons and causes of there being a world and its process at all.

The initial problem in connexion with the view of creation that denies any *finished* and *completed* act on the part of God, but rather an ever-renewed, ever-energising power, is that of *time*. It is a possible position, and such a one indeed Leibnitz professed to hold, that creation took place in *time*, and the constant sustaining of the world in being by God after its creation involves repeated acts no less original and absolute than did that of creation itself. Usually, however, the doctrine of continuous creation has as a correlative issue the *eternity* of the creation, and as such we propose to treat it here.

Those who maintain that the world had a temporal beginning are unable to assign any reason why God determined to create at a particular time, and what could have been the motive of His action. God being a Being Who lives altogether in eternity, or entirely free from temporal as well as spatial encumbrances, what *meaning* could we give to any act of His taking place at a particular time rather than at any other time? The whole question of time and times is infested with relativity due to finite categories of measurement. Kant regards the problem of the beginning of the world in time as one of those metaphysical antinomies that admits of no answer because it should never be asked. In his opinion time is one of the forms of pure intuition that necessarily accompanies all minds that inwardly resemble ours, it is not something *into* which but *with* which mind is created; he would therefore approach Augustine's view who is found saying that time came *with* creatures. creation took place not *in* time but *with* time.

Neither Kant nor Augustine *need* arrive at an *eternal* creation by making time immanent in finite spirit. The ideality of time forbids us to use time-symbolism as a context to God's action, which we almost invariably do use in ordinary thought, and this complicates the problem; but if they held that God's Absoluteness did not necessitate transcendent and immanent being—or otherwise expressed, that conditioned existence was not, in any sense, *involved in* God's own Nature—then the eternity of creation is virtually denied.

Every theory maintaining eternal creation makes the time-

symbolism a means of expressing other relations of the finite to the Absolute, such as that of dependence, or as that of transcendence and immanence. The eternal Logos of Christian thought and revelation is held to be somehow synonymous with the world of real being as known to finite spirits. God always requires otherness for realisation of perfect love; this postulates the Son from Whom, by way of reciprocal action, the divine love is completely returned. The world being but an imperfect type of its archetype the eternal Logos, does not perfectly reciprocate this love, hence the Logos becomes the *ideal* world as conceived in the mind and purpose of God, when it will, through the whole travel of its evolution, have completely realised its ideal. There is mutual implication of the eternal Word with the temporal world, and any distinct existence that the Word may have from the world is minimised. Extreme views even make the Son *only* the ideal world, the world as it will be when 'is' and 'ought to be' coincide.

Leaving now the question of time, let us pass on to examine the problem of continuous creation as it has been enunciated by its supporters.

We have observed that God is immanent in creation by way of presence and activity; and we have also stated that it was God, as so present and active, that constituted the ground, basis, and reason for all created things. Without His upholding and sustaining power all things would forthwith cease to exist. If this is the function of the immanence of God in the world, then He must be present and active as a *creative* presence, as a *creative* activity. Deistic views of God's relation to the world cannot be thought out without either reintroducing *immanence* as a connecting bond, or arriving at a dualistic universe. The overemphasis upon the *moral* disparity of the Creator to His creatures loses sight of the intimacy and closeness that both thought and religion demand as essential to their life. Dualism may be ultimate for the *will, qua will*, it can never be so for *man, qua man*.

Creation, then, may be regarded as a continuous process, not a completed event; if God ceased to act with just as much spontaneity, initiative, and absoluteness as He has ever done—or in

the words of believers in temporal creation, as He did in His creative fiat—then created existence would cease to be. This may seem *prima facie* to make all evolution more dependent upon the *immediate* and *direct* action of God than it would otherwise be; all efficient causes become final causes, all mechanism is teleology, all means are ends. This is a natural outcome of continuous creation and is profoundly true; means as well as ends, modes and manners as well as causes and reasons, are dependent upon the transcendent action of Deity for their development and their consummation. In any case, for God "harmony must have the form of teleology, unity of love, joy of creation, and goodness of virtue": how more appropriately behold the beauty of God than in His created works!

Progressive immanence is given a setting that is in closer relation to the Divine Life itself; God's transcendent action is seen to be the life of the immanent activity. The great world's altar stairs that slope from darkness up to God, and upon which each one of us has to make his ascent to Him, have God as their Creator, and the pilgrims who mount them have God also as their perpetual companion, as their constant and never-failing Friend.

"If He were moved to create, it could only be that He might through creation find a richer beatitude; and if the creature were needful to His blessedness, He must be still more needful to its. But if this be so, it can only mean that His creative action never ceases: the sabbath of the Creator is found in an activity which is ever beneficent and never tires."[1]

If it had been within our province, here would be a suitable place to introduce God's supreme manifestation or revelation of Himself in Christ, the personal and Incarnate Logos, as being the completion of the progressive immanence of Himself in the world. In Christ we no longer have God *in* man but God *as* man, and the difference between these two is immense; but the problems raised in both cases as regards the relation of God to creation and to Christ are of the same difficulty. Incarnation is the key to creation, and as Dr Fairbairn says, "there is no

[1] A. M. Fairbairn, *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion.*

problem raised by the idea of God manifest in the flesh as to the relation of the Divine nature to the human in the unity of One Person, or as to the historical origin of such a relation as its beginning in time; or as to the action of the limited manhood on the illimitable Godhood, which is not equally raised by the inter-relations of God and nature. Nature is the organism of Infinite Spirit."

It was in Christ that God so conditioned His Being as to be present with us in Person, this was the "culminating expression of that self-conditioning which is the root of the created and developing world." The Holy Spirit which proceeds to men through Christ is other than God the Infinite Unconditioned Being "*of* Whom are all things." God's immanence in the world, rendered possible by self-limitation or self-conditioning, forms the only possible background for the Incarnation; the divine within alone can bear witness to the divine without; His immanence was a presence by way of promise and prophecy, His Incarnation a fulfilment of the promise and the prophecy. "That which comes to us through Christ is the fulness of that Spirit in which God has ever been most highly and most intimately with men; and this, of course, implies such a manifestation of God as shall be the basis of such influences of the Spirit, or the centre from which they shall proceed."[1]

Our discussion of continuous creation has brought us to the very edge of evolution, for the boundary line between these two conceptions is so fine that any treatment of the one would be wholly incomplete and inadequate without a treatment of the other also. In our view precisely the *same* process is referred to by both terms, and the distinction, which is of the slightest, between them rests upon the *context* upon which each conception is based. Continuous creation has a transcendent background, the cosmic process is the working out, by means of God's immanent activity, of His *un*changeable and eternal purpose; and in maintaining the *continuous* presence and activity of God, directness and immediacy tend to displace indirectness and mediation. Evolution, referring to the same identical process,

[1] W. L. Walker, *The Spirit and the Incarnation.*

allows room for an agnostic attitude towards the *ground* or *cause* of the total movement within the created universe. Strictly it is without the province of evolution to entertain any theory as to the more ultimate questions of the metaphysically real, although systems innumerable have appeared in the course of the history of thought that profess to resolve all *spiritual* problems of fundamental origins, as well as fundamental ends, by means of the magic potency of the immanent and progressive life impulse. Heraclitus refused to pass to any static One, on the contemplation of Whose perfection the Eleatics loved to dwell. For him the perpetual flux was a sufficient *absolute*, reality being *dynamic* through and through. At the present day H. Bergson postulates the *élan vital* as offering more hope, and as capable of producing more newness, originality, and initiative than any perfect, complete, and self-sufficing Deity could do. "Évolution Créatrice" has its proper function to fulfil, but it has its own domain; *within* the world there is evolution and to spare, but if, in its efforts at self-transcendence, it tries to undermine the *One* of Whom, through Whom, and by Whom, are all things, one of 'the things' being evolution itself, then we venture to think that the consequences of such a misapplication into realms purely transcendental not only become impertinent and blasphemous, but impossible and *absurd*, in Lotze's sense of this term.

In our discussion of immanence and evolution we shall hope to approach the *immanental* side of the Logos doctrine, thereby adumbrating the latter section of the essay which is confined to the alternative limb of the subject, that of 'Incarnation.' If we need any authority for supposing that immanence is a Christian doctrine, perhaps sufficient reference can be found in the prologue to the Fourth Gospel. "In Him was Life; and the Life was the light of men"; "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and they that were His own received Him not." Here the author connects directly, by a few master strokes, the doctrine of God's immanence in the world through the Logos, with His subsequent Incarnation, as its completion. No longer have

we the imperfect and broken light of the Father by way of immanence, but the Only-Begotten Himself, *God Himself*, present and real.

(*b*) *Immanence and Evolution.*

Whatever may be the true account of evolution, whether the older and stricter view of an unfolding of a potential germ, or the epigenetic one of the appearance of continually new forms be the more correct, we shall not delay to enquire. In either case the problem of the relation of immanence to evolution as a whole is unaffected by the choice of either alternative theory.

Evolution, generally considered, liberates us from the idea that what has been must always be, that the laws and principles working in the whole of nature and of man, in the inorganic, organic, and conscious spheres, admit of no variation and can produce no new species and genera. On the other hand, the process of evolution moves according to law; uniformity and continuity invariably characterise its advance. Says E. C. Tainsh: "God will not grow chaotic, we are sure; but He is not bound by the past: He will ever be doing more, and in doing more He may seem to do differently. Differently, He will do, in the sense that the *modes* of an activity are determined by the activity."[1] Evolution is no blind and capricious progress of everything from we know not where to we know not whither; but it is an orderly dialectical advance, as well as a temporal one, from darkness up to God. The guiding star throughout the whole process is the presence of the divine within; the immanent teleological impulse being the dynamic power which eventually guarantees the course of development reaching its *goal*, while the spontaneity and immediacy of the advance is provided for by the impulsive germ, so aptly described by Bergson, by way of metaphor and analogy. Evolution, unless it were *teleological*, would be arbitrary and meaningless, as we cannot but think many theories of evolution to be. If the view here put forward appears to have predetermined the goal in advance, and the result can only be a 'block universe,' in spite

[1] E. C. Tainsh, *The Christian Hypothesis*.

of all the initiative of the *élan*, we can but repeat that to us the *real* is *co-extensive* with the *possible*. The real world, that is, the whole Spirit-world, and the super-essential world of the One or the Absolute, admits neither of *increase* by any thinkable evolution, nor of *decrease* by any thinkable devolution; on the contrary, increase and decrease themselves presuppose such a real and absolute world from which they themselves had their origin. All such antitheses never rise above the understanding, that has its life in dichotomy, but the Spirit-world infinitely transcends διάνοια, as we have seen. The *bête noire* of the 'block universe' arises because our freedom as moral beings, as relative creators, seems to be curtailed. All is *not* determined, we hear repeatedly from opponents of Absolutism; but the Spirit-world, wherein all evolution is destined to terminate when it is worthy of such a lofty privilege, is the *truth* and reality of desire itself, as well as of all other aspirations. The goal is not the annihilation of the means, but their consummation; finite yearning, striving, and desiring are not for ever doomed to interminable progress without any accomplishment; when our warfare on earth is over we hope to find a *Rest*, for we know Augustine spoke truly in saying that until we did attain such a *Rest*, restlessness would for ever be our portion.

Our inability to predict what the course of the evolutionary process may bring forth is a proof, not that the future is the result of creations absolutely new even for the *Absolute*, that is, for God, but that *we* are creatures to whom the flood-gates of the future are closed. For us, whose view is bounded in part by temporal and spatial limitations, no clear or open vision is possible; but no such hindrances can limit the Absolute standpoint of God, Who is *wholly* outside time, including future time, by way of transcending all time distinctions in the specious present, the eternal 'Now' of all real being. But if we can only see through a glass darkly, yet we know that the law of continuity will abide, connecting the new forms with the old. God will never violate His earlier methods of working by later ones which would present a contradiction to our thought. We have 'intuitive certainty,' which lies at the basis of reason itself, that

whatever evolution brings to birth in its ever extensive and intensive development, we shall not finally be put to confusion. That fundamental *faith* in the order of the world assures us that another and deeper reality, a transcendent reality, lies behind it, giving it unity, stability, and order. Natural reason alone might impress upon us the truth that all finite evolutions necessarily reflect, in their respective capacities, the invariableness and eternity of the Eternal, at once their alpha and their omega.

H. M. Relton speaks of Bergson's new Deity as unceasing life, action and freedom in the following terms. God Himself may be Changeless while within His creation there may be unceasing change, here is creative evolution in plenty. St Paul's principle preserves this distinction "that of Him and through Him and unto Him are all things"; here is a principle that alone secures a firm basis for an Incarnation, and a right apprehension of the relation of God to the finite creation. It secures the complementary truths of His transcendence and immanence, a false emphasis upon either leading to bankruptcy in the field of Christology.[1]

In our next chapter we shall come face to face with the problem of immanence and transcendence, and hope to show that these are necessarily *reciprocal* notions, neither having any assignable meaning without mutually implying the other. Some theories of evolution tend to deny any place to the transcendent, following the adherents of vital immanentism, but this is the death-blow to all revelation, as well as to the Revealer, and as far as we are able to see, to all evolution itself, including as a form of evolution, vital immanentism.

Man's fundamental needs depend upon the presence of the transcendental reality; all cognition, conation and feeling have their objective side; pure immanentism is unable to meet the problems raised by any finite experience, because this implies the subject-object relation. Truth, Goodness and Beauty, the intrinsic values, require transcendent reality as their home and their eternal abode. None of them is *created* by being sought, the

[1] See H. M. Relton, *A Study in Christology*.

search for the truth *implies* that there *is* a truth to be found, the striving after the good implies that good is independent of the act of striving, while the progressive realisation of the beautiful postulates a beauty to be so realised.

Baron von Hügel lays emphasis upon this objective side of Being, which he regards as essential to man's highest life in religion, and if so at all, then always and everywhere. "The history of the past efforts, and indeed all really adequate richness of immediate outlook, combine, I think, to answer that only the experience and the conviction of an *objective* Reality distinct from, and more than, man, or, indeed, than the whole of the world apprehended *by* man as less than, or as equal to, man himself, can furnish sufficiently deep and tenacious roots for our sense and need of an objective supreme Beauty, Truth and Goodness—of a living Reality which is already overflowing that which, in lesser degrees and ways, we small realities cannot altogether cease from desiring to become."[1] The sense of the objective Full Reality of God, and the need of Adoration are quite essential to Religion. The more wide awake religion is the more this will be realised, in spite of Paul Natrop, M. Guyau, and Benedetto Croce.[2]

As immanence and transcendence are complementary conceptions in the realm of philosophy, so kenosis and plerosis fulfil that function in the realm of religion. The more God imparts Himself through self-limitation the more He is able to manifest Himself and therefore to complete Himself through plerosis. "The Universe is God's kenosis," says Dr Garvie, "Absolute will limits itself in relative force; infinite mind in finite laws. What resembles Him least He controls most. In order most to fulfil Himself in His world He most empties Himself. The more He comes into the world, the more He renounces His absoluteness.

"In Christ this culminates. The Kenosis is complete, and the Plerosis is also complete, the glory of the alone-Begotten of the Father full of grace and truth. The more the immanence, the

[1] Baron von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion.*
[2] See von Hügel.

more the transcendence in ethical perfection. The Plerosis transcends the Kenosis, however."[1] "The more completely God is immanent in man, or, in Christian phraseology, the more the promise of Jesus is fulfilled, 'My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him,' the closer is the Apostolic prophecy 'that God may be all in all' to its fulfilment. Thus is perfect intercommunion through perfect interpenetration of Spirit with spirit, perfect fellowship, which is perfected personality, is attained in a community of holy love."[2]

The living energy of the divine immanence in the universe has been present from the first; eternity is set in the heart of man, and the whole process of evolution must be to reveal gradually the godlikeness within him. The great within must ultimately beat in harmony with the great without. Evolution is development of the potential germ within all living things, including man, which effects this final harmony. Without the transcendent, the immanent would lack suitable environment in which to grow, while without the immanent, God would have remained unconditioned, never having created a world in which to be immanent. Both are essential to evolution of whatever kind, for evolution is just that living process by whose working kenosis is transmuted into plerosis through the action of transcendent reality.

"Evolution—or immanence stated in *dynamic* terms—is the unfolding within the world of the Divine principle of life." Dr Mackintosh here conceives immanence as necessarily involving the energy of *divine will*. It is other than a 'stately passivity of *presence*,' for God is operative directly by means of living will; it is the manifestation of the '*Divine* principle of life,' because it is *God* Who works His sovereign will in evolution. "Immanence attempts to suggest, not only that He is present, but what He effects by His presence, and how the immanence is affected by it."[3] All reality in which the divine life resides must assume some evolutionary form, in some measure it must resemble its archetype, which is never a static perfection, if this is taken to exclude dynamic energy. The error

[1, 2, 3] F. Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought*.

is as great to conceive God as pure '*substance*' as to conceive Him as pure 'becoming'; monism and monadism both arrive at an *impasse* from which neither can conceivably find any escape. It does not take a very profound insight into nature and her laws to convince us that she teems with life, with movement and variety, as well as reverences these immutable principles of uniformity, continuity and abidingness. The step would not seem to be so vast and difficult to make, although many feel that they cannot take it, to find in those conditions under which nature moves a parallelism and an analogy to the conditions which the transcendent ground of all nature likewise obeys. In this latter case the conditions would know no limitations, and consequently we might as appropriately speak of lack of conditions, for God is unconditioned in the sense that He imposes upon Himself the conditions of His own Being; as Hooker said, "His Being is a law to His working," all the *necessity* of His nature being *internal* to the Nature itself, since He is free both from constraint and caprice. Nature's two aspects of change and permanence reflect the source and end of nature, Who Himself reveals Himself as Perfect *Life*, the synthesis of στάσις and κίνησις. Those types of evolution that deny the abidingness, the permanence throughout *all* the changing scenes of nature, throughout all the vicissitudes of striving, struggling humanity, these can admit of final Being, no Absolute, making its appearance *within* the whole constantly evolving world. If we use the phraseology of Christian theology, the Logos, in Himself immutable, unchangeable, perfect, and Himself the cause of all temporal finite development, has made Himself known to us now by just such an absolute act *within* the cause of evolution itself. The transcendent crown of Evolution is not subject to evolution because the process takes place within and up to Him, He is not within the process and up to it. "It has been objected that the principle of Evolution must needs veto the reality of a Person who is the final revelation of God because of His personal advent in time and attachment to whom constitutes the absolute religion. Now it is true that certain forms of evolutionary metaphysics are incompatible with the finality of Christ, as they

are incompatible with unconditioned values of every kind. But they are modes of thought which reject the divinity of Christ, because they may be said to have first rejected the divinity of God Himself—His eternal personality, His absolute holy Love, His power to enter human life." "The Idea," according to Strauss, "loves not to pour all its fulness into one example, in jealousy towards all the rest."[1] But, as Mackintosh proceeds to say, "Some colour might be lent to this strange misconception were the forth-streaming Divine life represented as having been totally confined to Jesus, His so exclusively as to be available for no one else. But in truth the love of God is concentrated in Jesus only that it may fill the world. 'Out of His fulness have all we received, and grace upon grace.'"[2]

Again, it may reasonably be argued that the final term of an evolutionary process can only come at the end, and to it must the whole process be moving. If an *Absolute* is to appear at all in a movement that is through and through relative, its presence within the movement is not only inexplicable but contradictory. But what, we may ask, is the verdict of history upon this subject? It "can show examples, such as the faultless art of Greece, of spiritual movements culminating in a perfection never repeated in later times. Hellas has not reproduced Phidias, or Sophocles, or Plato. It is vain to lay down *a priori* rules for the movement of the world. The cosmic process, as it has been put, 'may be like a symphony in which at definite points new instruments appear even in moments of absolute stillness. To say, moreover, that the most perfect instrument, most significant for the whole symphony, must appear at the end, is an arbitrary assumption.'"[3]

Only by a moral *act* can the Logos enter the world, by no ideal *process* is this possible. Christ is greater than a God "minorum gentium," the Christ of Arius. No non-divine Redeemer can be allowed, because the value of a soul in the sight of God is so great that none other than the Only-Begotten can save it. "Christ is final, not that evolution has terminated, but evolution is now *within* God's final word and not *up to* it.

[1, 2] H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ*, p. 438.
[3] Mackintosh, *op. cit.* p. 439.

It is unfolding the Christ and not producing Him."[1] The Christian revelation is final, complete, *absolute*; man's apprehension of that revelation ever grows by his progressive capacity for receptivity. Immanence implies transcendence, but Incarnation is necessarily absolute, as God and man, transcendence and immanence, ideal and real, have become an established identity. Immanence, as we have seen, admits of degrees; Incarnation, as we shall see, admits of none.

A study of evolution in its relation to the immanence of God should be directed to show the closeness of these two conceptions and their dependence upon each other; while the synthesis of the *Logos*, conceived as always immanent in the world, and the Logos as personally incarnate, should illustrate the necessary continuity between the old order and the new, as originating in the Incarnation.

The Unincarnate God has a wider range though a less deep meaning than the Incarnate God, but each aids in the interpretation of the other.[2] God Unincarnate needed and supplemented God Incarnate, the revelation given to pre-incarnational times proceeded from the same source as did that of the Christ Himself; God reveals Himself as we are able to bear it; but eventually a point is reached when God as immanent and incarnate can reveal no further, the Revealer Himself must tabernacle amongst men, to fulfil and consummate all preceding lesser manifestations of that presence. "That the Son in His creative activity should work towards the realisation in creation of a humanity bearing the stamp and character of His sonship is one thing; it is a normal process of evolution through the power of the Logos from inanimate matter up to human sonship. That He should become *personally* incarnate is quite another: it is a unique act."[3]

"The historic Incarnation is a *revelation*, not an *initiation* of the Divine activity in mankind. It is always there. The Logos operations are creative, controlling and redeeming manifestations of the self-imparting and immanent God. The mediation

[1] P. T. Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ.*
[2] See Baron von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses.*
[3] D. W. Forrest, *The Christ of History and of Experience.*

of the Logos-Spirit is regarded in the Bible as an unbroken continuity of the indwelling God. 'As I happen to be always in the world, I am the Light of the world.' 'Before Abraham was, I am.' 'Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it, and was glad.' All who have known God have known Him as self-expressed and self-uttered in Christ mediated as the 'Logos.' The immanent God, thus mediated, was known prior to the Incarnation through intimations, gracious resolve, spiritual impulses, above the natural man's discernment. There were preparations for the Incarnate One, which was the consummation of an eternal ministry whereby God has ever been imparting Himself to man through the immanence of the Logos-Spirit."[1]

It is due to the immanence of the divine life within every created thing that *constitutes* its *being*. God must therefore have been present and active by way of *immanence* in the world at all times, and His action is also, as we have before observed, a *creative* activity. Revelation has the characteristics of unity and continuity, of unity because the Revealer is *One*, of continuity because His working is orderly, harmonious, coherent and reasonable. Only this *continuity* of revelation will explain the resemblances between the Old Testament book of Wisdom and Plato, St Paul and the Greek Mysteries, St John and Philo, Tertullian and Roman Law, Augustine and Plotinus, the Dionysian writer and Proclus, St Thomas Aquinas and Aristotle.[2]

The view is a mistaken one that would *isolate* the Logos Incarnate to its greater glory. Only by a full appreciation of St John's presentation of the life of Christ as the *Personal* appearance of the Light of the world, which has ever been shining in the darkness, can we realise the true significance, the wondrous patience and gentleness of God's ways with men.

Human perfection as a condition attainable suddenly and completely is a false view of the true nature of progress, since it is neither a cause nor an effect of Theism properly understood, but always its substitute. "You can have as your centre, God; or you can have as your centre such sudden and complete human Progress and Perfection: you *cannot* have *both*."[3]

[1] F. Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought*.
[2] See Baron von Hügel. [3] F. H. Bradley.

If man began as a shapeless material substance, and continued to develop, yet he *is* not that substance, nor is the God of the Jews the mutterings and tremblings of a volcano in the peninsula of Sinai.[1] Dr Inge speaks very much to the same effect, for he says that we ought to take little interest in trying to balance a pyramid upon its apex.

Evolution and immanence interpenetrate throughout the whole life of man and nature; they advance together because they are but two sides of the same real movement. The higher the stage of evolution to which a thing has attained, the greater is God immanent within it. These are but reciprocal processes and necessarily imply each other. Evolution is but the capacity man has for self-transcendence, but self-transcendence is possible only because God lives in him by His immanent activity. God transcends His own immanence, but as the immanent God is the life of man's life, the soul of his soul, the unfolding of this immanent divine life in man is the progressive revelation of the transcendent life of God, a progression which has no end. If we may regard the transcendence as taking the form of an ideal in man, an ideal attainable but never attained, immanence is this ideal in the degree to which it has been realised. God, as Transcendent, is made known to man only by receptive intuition, for He always abides above him; God, as Immanent, he can perceive by spiritual vision, for as such He is the spark at the centre of his being. The whole of evolution is but the continual passage of God as Transcendent to God as Immanent, which we may regard either as the effect of a force *a tergo*, that drives the whole of creation to expand in ever-new forms of development, or as the effect of an attraction *a fronte*, the dynamic power in this case being the *yearning* by which each fragment of the whole aspires to reproduce the pattern in itself that it beholds upon the mount of vision. Under the inspiration and guidance of the divine life within, and in response to the divine life without, each element of creation strives to know even as it is known. Evolution is the name given to that process whereby all things are in the act of realising their true natures, a process

[1] See Baron von Hügel.

which culminates only when everything is seen, known, and experienced *internally* by everything else.

This would mean the complete immanence of God in creation, and of such immanence Platt speaks as follows: "Real immanence is the complete contact and fellowship of persons, each conscious of himself as he is of the other, who know and will and love in free but reciprocal intimacy. Immanence then in man is affinity not absorption; a correspondence of being, confidence of intimacy, not a coalescence of distinctions, 'a Face like unto my face.'" God is "over and around as well as *within*. 'God is not as long as I am I; and God is not I any more than I am God,'" "For is He not all but that which has power to feel 'I am I'?"[1]

There are types of immanentist doctrine which threaten to engulf all finite being in some pantheistic Absolute; but we have argued above that this is to do violence to the whole conception of immanence. The distinction, which is a fundamental one, between immanence and Incarnation is entirely lost to view on the appearance of such a false Absolute as some thinkers would place upon the throne of the universe. We can agree with Professor Ward that secondary causes take a subordinate place, from one point of view of God's immanence; that nature is executive only, since God is the ever-present ground of nature, the cosmic order being neither His delegate nor His rival; but this is not to assert universal *incarnation* in nature.

We shall hereafter argue that while immanence admits of *degrees*, *Incarnation* admits of none. In the conception of Incarnation, as understood by Christian thought, we are presented with a final, supreme and *absolute* revelation of God to man. Henceforth the evolution of the spiritual consciousness is *within* and *up to* Christ, the Incarnate Logos; not that both He and us are subject to the same laws of evolution *up to* God.

Campbell's statement 'Jesus is God, and so are we,' is false, as Incarnation is denied in favour of immanence. In no sense are we 'potential Christs'; neither in time nor in eternity will it ever be possible to predicate identity between Him and us. "Man is not Man as yet. God dwells in us that we may

[1] See F. Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought*.

dwell in Him." "God's dwelling in every man coming into the world is not to assert the significance of the Incarnation as *un fait accompli* in each man's life."[1] Nothing can be more disastrous than to confuse the metaphysic of immanence with the metaphysic of faith. Immanence, in one of its many forms, is the natural ally of transcendence, and must necessarily obtain a place in any philosophy that is neither pantheistic nor deistic, in any theory of the nature of ultimate reality which asserts *transcendent* being; *universal incarnation* is the first step towards the plunge into an absolutist metaphysic, in which God and the world are equally necessary, and therefore equally real constituents of the Absolute. The God of all religions that allow a God, has disappeared; there is no perfect and absolute Being as yet, He is in the process of '*becoming*,' but eventually wholly 'hopes to be.' The substitution of universal for particular Incarnation, so far from being a profounder and truer view of God's relation to creation, as Hegel thought that it was, is, in fact, the destruction of the significance of the Incarnation of the Logos altogether. Even if the sphere in which philosophy moves is that of the 'Notion,' the 'Idea,' yet Hegel minimised the religious standpoint by describing it as that of the pictorial and figurative consciousness. The religious mind rises even above philosophy in her highest mood, even above νοῦς, for its realm is none other than that of the *Spirit*. Particularity has always been a stumbling-block to thought, which is the abstract universal, yet *spirit* synthesises the particular and the universal, as Hegel himself taught. *Many* incarnations would require synthesis, for 'many' is 'a superfluity of logic,' and *logic* must not be mentioned here; thus we should be seeking for the Incarnate in all incarnations, which would at once impart distinction, but this is impossible in *Incarnation*. Rather, it seems, Incarnation can only take place in *One* individual *once*, for it is an eternal *act* of an eternal Being.

The *individual*, then, is the crown and coping-stone of Evolution. It is in Spirit *as such* which has concreted itself, but which is, for all that, essentially *spirit*, that is in *personality*, that divine

[1] F. Platt, *op. cit.*

immanence reaches its goal; for immanence is but the prophecy and promise of personality, it is personality making itself known indirectly by way of influence, suggestion and premonition. "Personality is the glory of the universe and not its shame; creation is higher than evolution, and pardon than Nemesis because it is more personal. God is light to the unenlightened, but man to the enlightened. We are permitted to remain for a time evolutionary or pantheistic until the time comes when we are worthy to be anthropomorphic."[1]

The problem of the relation between evolution and immanence no doubt raises the great question of *Time*. How, it may be asked, can a process, which is itself dependent upon temporal succession and has its life therein, be in any way related to the Being Who is quite unrelated to time, and yet Who constitutes the transcendent ground of the process, and has His immanent life within it?

This perennial problem of the relation of time to eternity can receive but a passing notice at our hands. When dealing with creation and immanence we had occasion to enter a little more fully into the intricacies of the whole question.

Augustine was fundamentally right in subordinating time to the creature. Time is internal to spirit, not external; spirit transcends time, and not time spirit, for all spirits that are not infinite move in some time-order, however those orders may differ from ours. Again, individual or perceptual time is unique for each person; conceptual time being an abstraction from this only *real* Time, and rendered possible by intersubjective intercourse. Each spirit being unique, it would follow, from Augustine's view of time, that each had its *own* time-order, and psychology is convincing us of the truth of this dictum.

As we have observed elsewhere, time is purely relative to the nature of the being under consideration. The more physical anything is, the more does it live in physical time, whose limiting point in the downward direction is pure repetition, as Leibnitz has told us. Pure extension, which, however, is but a metaphysical figment, is simply incessant; psychical beings experi-

[1] C. C. J. Webb.

ence times of *intensive* as well as of *extensive* magnitude. We enter the region of 'specious presents,' which synthesise into partial simultaneity the discreteness of extensity by interpenetration of the abstract units, when spiritual being begins to partake of eternity. Here extensity and protensity fade into the light of common day, so great is the intensity, due to the qualitative and concentrative nature of the spiritual experience. Extension and duration are not *annihilated* in simultaneity, which is not the momentary simultaneous of temporal sequence; in such a case God would have been *hidden*; but they are swallowed up in life. The non-successive God embraces succession, duration, time, without destroying them. Eternity is the reality of their life, giving them all that they possess, and each time-order shows forth eternity as much as it can.

Time, then, varies with the nature of the being in existence, that is, with the degree in which God has His immanent Life in all things. Evolution, with its temporal setting, is entirely a relative process, dependent upon the absolute ground of God's immanence in it for its participation in eternity, as well as for its successive progression.

Baron von Hügel states that the more a man is united to God, the more will he move in *Concrete* Time, which becomes more and more a Partial Simultaneity. This experience of his will both testify to, and contrast with, the fully simultaneous God. He warns us against the error of making both God's simultaneity and man's successiveness equally essential and necessary elements of one single Divine-creaturely existence, in the manner of Professor Josiah Royce in *The World and The Individual*. This, he thinks, is due to the confusion of God's *eternity* with *unendingness*. Hegel reappears with his abstract infinite and abstract finite, neither of which can be *absolute*; both, therefore, are but factors in the absolute synthesis which is certainly not the God of any religion whom men are accustomed to worship.

"The fully Simultaneous Reality awakens and satisfies man's deepest, most nearly simultaneous life, by a certain adaptation of its own intrinsic life to these human spirits. In such varyingly 'incarnational' acts or action the Non-Successive God

Himself condescends to a certain Successiveness; but this is in order to help His creatures to achieve as much Simultaneity as is compatible with their several ranks and calls."[1] If these condescensions appear to have a non-successive element in them, we must not be surprised; nor if the deepest religious consciousness tends usually to conceive God's *outward* action, if future, then as proximate, and if *present*, then as strictly simultaneous.[2]

"Eternity has been defined as infinite duration without succession, as an absolute *nunc stans*, or as a *totum simul*. But duration, succession, and simultaneity, 'the three modes of Time' as Kant called them, are mutually implicated; as for them these definitions are either incomplete or contradictory."[3]

We must carefully distinguish between the 'passing now' and the 'standing now'; the former is Hegel's single now, "duration is the universal of this now and that now"; the 'now' of time is purely relative to other 'nows' and therefore cannot be absolute. The 'standing now' must include all temporal 'nows,' being itself included by none. Dr Ward says, that as we do not say the whole of 'immensity' is spaceless, "so we should not say that eternity as a whole is timeless, but simply that it is infinite *a parte post* and also *a parte ante*."[4] In our zeal for God's eternity we must beware that we do not arrive at the empty abstraction obtained by denuding the reality of His Being of all content. Even should Hegel be right in asserting that the natural only is subject to time, while the spiritual is eternal; yet if time is the garment of eternity, if the world of space and time, the world of change, variety and evolution, is God's under the form of succession, then He cannot be entirely out of all relation to the temporal process. Neither God, nor finite beings created in His image, can be either immersed in the temporal flux, or be totally separated from it. Both must be related to it although remaining above it.[5]

Here a difficulty presents itself, however. God, we are sure, must be perfect, He must be unchangeable and without shadow of turning, yet He must be a *living* and active God, He must be

[1] Baron von Hügel. [2] See Baron von Hügel.
[3, 4, 5] J. Ward.

the transcendent context as well as the immanent content of the world's life. Man, we are equally sure, is destined to attain perfection, yet his very existence depends upon progress and change. Can perfection co-exist with life? Can perfection be attained through any progressive series whatsoever? Plotinus would answer that any perfection that was not the fulness of life was worthless, dead, and unmeaning; while man's predicament can be overcome, not by remaining within the progressive series, *as progressive*, but by transcending all progression and the *time*-order, its essential concomitant; for he would agree with Hegel that the natural alone is subject to time, "to exist in time is the same thing as to exist imperfectly."

To see things *sub specie aeternitatis* is to see them as God sees them, it is to see them in eternity, for eternity is the atmosphere of spiritual beings. "As for the phenomenal world, 'things that are born are nothing without their future.' It is their nature and the condition of their existence to be always 'making acquisitions.' Things that are born yearn to continue in existence, because perpetuity is the symbol and copy of the permanence of Eternity, and the effort to make perpetual progress is the symbol and copy of the perfection of Eternity."[1]

Plotinus assigns time to the creations of the world-soul; only when the necessary self-realisation through upward contemplation took place, only when the World-Soul put itself forth into actuality, did Time arise as the *form* of its creations. In taking upon itself the form of a servant and the likeness of a creature of Time, all creation was made to share in this subjection to Time and all things. "It is 'the Life of the Soul as it moves from one manifestation to another.'" "Time is the activity of an eternal Soul, not turned towards itself nor within itself, but exercised in creation and generation."

The time-order is the expression of *will* activity rather than of nature or essence. He says "it is *the form of willed change*." "Every distinct idea yonder becomes a finite purpose Here. Every attribute of God's essence becomes an activity of His existence. The time process is not the necessary form of the

[1] W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, vol. I.

self-evolution of God; it is the product of His free but necessary creative activity."[1] And Dr Inge adds: that it is "because this act of creation is willed, and willed as a process, there must be an interval between the inception and conclusion of the process. This interval is Time."[2]

Another view of the relation of time and eternity is found in Höffding, Plotinus and Lotze, although with Lotze time is the result of *signification*, while in the philosophies of Höffding and Plotinus it seems sometimes to arise from the judgment of valuation.

Höffding rejects the dualism inherent in the teleological categories of means and end, and regards the process of evolution as *itself* an end. Each stage of development, each new phase of life in the temporal progression, has its own immediate value and is as truly an end as a means. He considers it a mistake to subordinate past and present to future, as if the whole series could find its value only in the final term. To see the eternal tabernacling in the temporal, to see God as real and active in every event and movement, and not only through the halo of potency and promise, is to make life in time blend with life in eternity. "'Eternity' appears then not as the prolongation of time...but as an expression for the permanence of value during the alteration of the times."[3]

Plotinus makes both space and time a kind of 'matter' to Soul, for they are the field of its external activity, representing orderly arrangements within a whole. Soul being creator of Time is above it, and its recognition of anteriority and posteriority is not in time, but in *order*. We have entered the apprehension of time as *valuation*, through the transition from physical time as pure repetition to duration, *la durée* of Bergson, which possesses intensive magnitude.[4]

Lotze thinks that light may be shed upon the perplexing problem of time by attempting "to seek time reality only in the conditioning force which every event exercises upon its own result, regarding time, which appears to our imagination as the unending form in which this order is embraced, as a mere form

[1, 2] W. R. Inge, *op. cit.* [3, 4] Suggested by J. Ward and W. R. Inge.

of conception in which, for us only, is spread out the timeless connection of the cosmic content." "In themselves, past, present and future are not different as far as time is concerned, but simultaneous; in this whole of reality nothing passes away; but the whole is a whole of members which condition one another, and is comparable to a system of truths of which the simplest condition all the rest, and precede them not in time but in importance; not only does the series of consequences proceed in a straight course from them, but also all the propositions which depend in equal degree upon those principles, appear as co-ordinate, simultaneous, and of equal value."[1]

Making allowance for the inadequacy of the comparison of reality to a system of truths, he proceeds, "but it is so organized by means of relations of reciprocal conditioning, that each of its parts presupposes immeasurable series of causes, draws after it an equally immeasurable series of results, and finds itself at the same distance as countless other members, from the first causes, or from any given member of the whole."

"It is this organization which is intuited by cognition in temporal succession; the condition precedes that which it conditions, the latter follows, the causes and results which are most closely connected are in immediate juxtaposition, the more distant results are divided from their immediate cause by a space of time which is filled up by the successive intermediate links which connect it with that cause."[2] But for all *finite* beings a place is allotted *within* the series, for each is a member thereof, and thus "the assumptions which it involves, as far as it knows them, appear to be past, its consequences, as far as it is certain of them, to be future; and for the rest, the whole of its unknown causes and of its incalculable effects appear as an endless past and an endless future."[3]

For finite intelligence, even if placed within a *timeless* system, it would see as its future some special content whether clear or obscure, while some other as its past; "life which makes the former more and more clear and the latter gradually more and more faint, is not conceivable without a real stream of occur-

[1] R. H. Lotze, *Microcosmus*, Bk IX. [2, 3] Lotze, *op. cit.*

rence which carries consciousness past the content of the world, or the content of the world past consciousness, or lets both change together."[1] But if this is the case with all finite intelligence, due to the conditioned nature of its existence, for God it must be necessarily otherwise, as there is no definite spot in the time series which is our point of reference and by which we are able to conceive of a past or a future as the regions where happenings take place that are external to us. He is not a member of the series but its all-embracing essence, and is, therefore, as near to any part of this reality as to any other; "and although there lie open to His all-penetrating knowledge those inner relations by which this whole would be systematized into a temporal order, yet for Him no particular point has exclusively the specific worth of *the present*; for God, this belongs to the infinite whole."[2]

For Lotze the mutually conditioning and conditioned series is primary, and time is allowed to arise as the effect these conditions produce upon a member of the conditioned and conditioning, who is itself limited to this conditional order, and therefore perceives the series as a 'no longer' and a 'not yet.'

From the standpoint of the religious consciousness the relation of the eternal to the temporal, of God to evolution, is conceived in a different light from any of the preceding theories.

We have seen that time may be subordinated to *qualitative* change, for it has intensive magnitude as it passes into duration, while all its extensity and protensity vanish in eternity. It partakes in the white light that for ever shines of eternity, as evolution partakes of God's absoluteness, and is not, therefore, solely the 'measure of the impermanence of the imperfect,' but "it is the measure of a definite finite activity directed to some end beyond itself," or in Plotinus' own words it is "*οὐκ αὐτὴ τελειοῦται, ἀλλὰ τὸ πρᾶγμα οὗ ἐστοχάζετο.*"[3]

The religious man knows of a life that endures, but yet is not temporal; it is a life where the knowledge of God produces an abiding satisfaction, where to do the *will* of God is to abide for ever. Contrasting such a life with that of the 'time-seeking,'

[1, 2] Lotze, *op. cit.* [3] W. R. Inge.

'self-serving' man, Dr Ward remarks: "The lapse of time, though quantitatively it should be alike for both, is qualitatively wholly different. The life lived in One in Whose Presence is the fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore, is not one of lifeless passivity," for effective energy may at such times be maximal; but rather it is the foretaste "of that ἠρεμία which Aristotle associates with the Divine ἐνέργεια ἀκινησίας."[1] Eternity then transcends Time, as Plotinus makes Spirit transcend Soul; but here in the life of the Spirit, in the life of God, which is above the evolutionary series, all meanings are completely realised, all relations completely acknowledged. "The Soul must take its Time-experience up with it to the threshold of Eternity; it will leave nothing behind as it crosses the threshold. The life of the Soul in its higher aspect is a contemplation of Spirit. That is to say, all real psychical ends belong to the spiritual world. Ends are striven for in Time, but there can be no ends in Time, which swallows its own children."[2]

Evolution must hand over its treasures, so hardly won in the grim and solemn valley of life, before it ever really may possess them as its own; time must work out its own salvation by repeated dedications of its gifts on the altar of eternity, until the final Great oblation, no longer of the gifts but of the giver, consummates its long and wearisome journey by crowning it with immortality.

Time, the very warp and woof of evolution, has its own uniquely precious lesson to teach us. We should notice with the poet

> How every time with every time is knit,
> And each to all is mortised cunningly,
> And none is sole or whole, yet all are fit.[3]

The exquisite harmony that prevails throughout "Time's complete estate," which becomes closer and more immediate, as it passes by successive gradations into eternity, is but a mirror of teleology and purpose that runs its sublime course through the world.

[1] See J. Ward, *Realm of Ends*. [2] W. R. Inge. [3] S. Lanier.

Time that adores on the knees of prayer, Time that mounts on the wings of praise, to consecrate its tribute before the Almighty's Throne, the Lord and Potentate of Time, has put off its nature as symbol and sacrament, for it has received the crown of glory that fadeth not away. Evolution, change, time, must blend with the light that never was on sea or land, meanwhile they must abide their allotted span

> Till they join the hidden, the boundless sea
> Rolling through the depths of eternity.[1]

For

> Change finds no likeness of itself in Thee,
> And makes no echo in Thy mute eternity.[2]

[1] G. Macdonald. [2] F. W. Faber.

CHAPTER IV

IMMANENCE *and* TRANSCENDENCE

THROUGHOUT our whole discussion of the doctrine of Immanence we have observed how continually the Transcendent reality has invaded our territory, forbidding us to remain for a moment enveloped in a pure immanentism with no wider and more extensive horizon beyond, a horizon that recedes for ever and for ever as we move towards it.

In this chapter the problem of Immanence and Transcendence will meet us face to face, for we shall be engaged in determining, as far as this lies within our power, what precisely is the relation between these two mutually complementary concepts. We shall then have considered the divine immanence in the world as it manifests itself in the rich variety of the cosmic content, giving rise to *diverse degrees* of God's activity and presence therein. Taking a vaster sweep we passed in review the relation of immanence to the fundamental conceptions of creation and evolution, creation being the term we give to the 'why' of the world; evolution that which attempts to describe to us the 'how' thereof.

Creation implies, as we saw, a transcendent cause, a transcendent reality; and without creation no cosmos. Evolution also implies such a transcendent cause, for how explain the process of development, of growth, of change, otherwise? yet the direct and immediate reference to the Transcendent was not so obvious here as it was in creation. If we may say, without creation, no world, resulting in a 'hidden' God; surely without evolution, no *living* world, resulting in a *dead* God. Adopting a saying of Hartmann, the world gets its 'that' from creation, its 'what' and its 'how' from evolution.

This chapter, which concludes our whole doctrine of Immanence, brings us directly to the problem of the relation between immanent and transcendent reality. This will form, therefore, a natural transition to the doctrine of Incarnation, which is the fusion of the immanent with the transcendent Deity. In Christ, bestowal and receptivity could go no further; He was com-

pletely receptive of the fulness of the ineffable Godhead, for He was none other than the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. If we take our point of departure from immanent reality, and ascend in dignity of being by successive increments of immanence, and in consequence, by successive and fuller manifestations of God, our procedure will for ever fail to reach that supreme point, where we shall be able to say, here is no longer a man in whom God is uniquely revealed by way of His immanent presence and life, but here is an *Incarnation* of the Supreme God Himself. Immanence can never, by its unaided help, yield Incarnation, it can never lead us to One Who is 'God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God.'

On the other hand, should we start from transcendent reality, all idea of Incarnation must of necessity be excluded, for here God is "the high and Holy One that inhabiteth Eternity"; He is the Absolute of some philosophies, that never condescends to create a world at all, if indeed such a movement as creation is not radically impossible.

Immanence and Transcendence are both but abstractions from the one real relation of God to the creation; and while they have a legitimate place in the realm of the understanding, where dichotomy reigns supreme, they are transcended in the realm of the spirit and spiritual apprehension, where interpenetration and synthesis take the place of division and analysis.

What neither can accomplish separately may not be so impossible for both together; yet, according to the fundamental law of triadic movements of the real, the synthesis is more and greater than either taken individually or collectively. Revelation, such as is vouchsafed to man in the Incarnation, is beyond both immanence and transcendence; these being but feeble attempts of διάνοια to express in intellectual terms a spiritual content that far transcends all categories of the intellect. But if immanence and transcendence must both confess their incompetence to explain the Incarnation, they may form the very essential antechamber, in which all aspirants to a full comprehension of the Incarnation must for long make their stay, ere they are fitted to approach the august mystery, the inner shrine,

wherein alone may the key be found to unravel every secret of this mighty world.

Before embarking upon the subject of this chapter, allow us to remind ourselves of a very necessary caution, that should continually be borne in mind throughout the entire work. To demand exactness and precision of thought in the lofty regions of the Absolute can only lead to failure, besides being a false ideal. About all great works, says Ruskin, there is an air of indefiniteness, an atmosphere of infinity; the boundary lines must be indistinct, for the shores of transcendent reality know no limits; all our little lives are rounded with a sleep.

In such unfathomed deeps of real being, to think exactly is too often but to think falsely; we purchase precision at the expense of truth. Nay, there are matters, as Joubert reminds us, with regard to which "*toute précision est erreur.*" "*Il y a des choses, que l'homme ne peut connaître que vaguement; les grands esprits se contentent d'en avoir des notions vagues.*" The demand for exactness in high thinking is a mark of the "*esprit vulgaire*," the commonplace mind, which cannot grasp the breadth or fathom the depth of the great problems which it desires to solve, and which cares less for truth than for mental repose. It is the call of the mysterious and the unknown, not the voice of dogmatic authority, which draws man on, in the course of his spiritual development, from strength to strength.[1]

There are regions of the spirit, regions at once most profound and most sublime, where dogmas gasp their life out, and noisy creeds shrink to filaments; sacrament and symbol have performed their part, they have conducted us very far along the road, but here they can have no place; all nature, all externality, is the language of signs, but here all mediation is transcended by something too immediate, something too intimate for mediation. All moulds break, the process of the successive crystallisations of the real has given place to the real itself, which was all along the innate dynamic force, urging the unwilling dross to ever-changing forms.

All great problems are surrounded with mystery, with the

[1] See E. G. A. Holmes, *Evolution and God.*

unknown, with the awful; this is their proper environment, and it is only when so surrounded that they can breathe. Everything in the last resort '*exit in mysterium*'; for everything is rooted in the One, and abides in the One, as its ever-sustaining and ever-preserving ground and reality.

With this warning, which cannot be uttered too often, nor too constantly retained in mind, we may now approach the last problem that will occupy us in the doctrine of immanence.

Wherever the sole emphasis is laid upon immanence, pantheism is never very far off; and wherever the divine transcendence is not allowed to tabernacle in the world of forms, there we may expect some philosophy resembling deism.

Panentheism, the word happily coined by K. C. F. Krause, guards both the immanence and transcendence of the divine life in the world, for it maintains, neither with pantheism that all things are God, nor that each thing is God, nor again, with deism, that nothing is *within* God, and that all is totally separated from Him; but rather that 'all things are *in* God.' He embraced them, and is all that they are, while they neither individually nor collectively embrace Him, nor are they all that He is. If we interpret transcendence *spatially*, then God is quantitatively greater than the world; if *temporally*, then He is eternally greater; while, to argue the *personality* of the transcendent, is to make Him greater as a personally subsistent and independent Being.[1] There can be no danger in speaking of space as God's immensity, of time as His successiveness, and of personality as His mode of real being, if we refrain from implicating Him in the world's finite processes, as some Absolutist theories have not done.

Transcendence must preserve us from pantheistic notions of the Divine presence in the world, immanence must preserve us from cold and lofty deism. Nature and temporal progress are not necessary phases in the self-realisation of the Absolute, as Hegel would have us believe. God must be, not only prior and posterior to the world in the order of thought, but also in the order of real being, or of spirit. Hegel's ambiguity as regards

[1] See *E.R.E.* vol. VII, pp. 167 f.

the dialectical and temporal developments leaves us in doubt as to his real meaning. Perhaps those Hegelians are right who maintain that their master regarded *universal* incarnation as a more profound and truer expression of the relation between God and the world than a particular Incarnation in one single historic instance.

All theories that deny God's externality by way of transcendence of the temporal processes; or that deny that He is not essentially distinct from the universe; or that He is constituted by the sum total of the parts together with their relations; or that He is the underlying real unity, the noumenal reality of the phenomenal and multiple world, being but the other aspect of finite existence; all such theories cannot admit any real transcendent Deity, Who, in His Absolute being, entirely remains above all immanent activity within the world itself.

W. H. G. Holmes expresses the Christian view of immanence in the following terms. It is not vital energy manifesting itself in myriad forms throughout the universe; nor is it the Vedantist equation Brahmā = *ātmā*. The playfulness of the One is impossible. There are thoughts in the world not God's, and thus there is a limit to His immanence. The Lord was not in the wind, earthquake, nor fire, as He *was* in the voice. Perhaps the Lord is not the *cobra* either. We are like Him, but entirely unlike Him in that which is the essential and fundamental attribute of the Divine Nature, which is Its Independence. To say that God is Transcendent is to say that He cannot be brought into any class or category of existence.[1]

From a strictly philosophical standpoint, we shall have to maintain that God *is* immanent in the wind, earthquake and fire, because His immanence *constitutes* the *being* of these things; but there still remains ample latitude for the religious significance of these words. With Mr Holmes, we agree that Transcendence can never be subsumed under any category, whose content is either of the possible or real world; transcendence spells the super-essential of mysticism, the being and not-being, the object of some mystics' adoration and worship.

[1] See W. H. G. Holmes, *The Presence of God*, p. 5.

No finite mind can embrace the fulness of transcendent Being, for our knowledge is limited by our receptivity. God is not exhausted by creation, for then immanence and transcendence would coincide, but He excels it in every way. There must be no identifying of God with nature, for this would render evolution an impossible process, as it implies a ground upon which and up to which to evolve. Neither has God, as it were, two modes of Being; He is not partly in the universe and partly beyond it, but the one supreme indivisible God is wholly where His thought is manifested in the universe, and wholly transcends it. He is *totum inter omnia et totum extra*.[1] He can only be immanent in creation because He, as the Absolute, transcends it and is independent of it. There is no identity or absorption. Immanence secures its separation from Him and its closest identity with Him. There is inspiration, sustainment, and pervasion, yet not identity.[2] "Transcendence is rather of *superiority* than of *separation*. It is compatible with intimacy, love, communion. 'God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,' yet 'He is nigh unto them which are of a broken heart.' It excels, not excludes, His creation. By His own nature He transcends all, especially by way of *perfection*."[3]

> The God without he findeth not
> Who finds Him not within.

In Christianity there is ample evidence for the assertion that the primary thought about God is not His immanence in all things, but His transcendence above and beyond all things; not that He is Almighty, but that He is—'Holy, Holy, Holy.' We can observe omnipotence, power and might in finite creations, but for His Holiness, His love, and awful purity we must be receptive of His transcendent Being through revelation.

It is in the higher degrees of God's immanent activity in creation that we behold the greater contrast between His immanence and transcendence. In man, who is under both physical and moral law, we can observe the mighty antithesis, the awful gulf, that separates him from his Creator.

[1] See W. H. G. Holmes, *op. cit.*
[2] See F. Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought*.
[3] F. Platt, *op. cit.*

Man may be lost in his environment, but in being so he rises above it and transcends it. If it is the paradox of religion and other thought that, according to the view-point, the processes of the universe can be described 'naturally,' so that men have no need of the concept 'God'; if the experiences of immanence and transcendence thus co-exist; yet 'nature' is through and through permeated with the transcendent, and is prophetic of its eventual realisation.[1] "The state of *pure* nature might, without doubt, have existed, but that in fact, it does not exist, and that, in fact, it never has existed."[2]

Man can neither merge himself in nature, nor even in God; he transcends the former and is transcended by the latter; all pantheistic and absolutist absorptions annihilate the ethical and spiritual qualities, that are integral and vital elements in man's constitution.

The familiar and constantly reiterated language of mysticism, which lends very powerful support to some mode of *absorption* of the soul in the abyss of the Divine Being, must at this point be disregarded. Every consideration of mystical experiences, that does not leave confusion worse confounded, would assume dimensions out of all proportion to the importance of this subject—in itself all-important—in our present connexion. We have already touched upon the fringe of mysticism in our chapter on philosophical conceptions, and this must suffice to indicate the danger of rushing into a subject that deserves the utmost care and caution in its treatment.

In man the thing that is most immanent is a transcendent thing in itself, something for ever about to be, an evasive activity of God, a perpetual challenge for the love and aspiration of the soul. The soul in and for its actual possession of the love of God and of its own love towards God put away any merging of itself in, any equation of itself with, the absolute Being.

Some of the most vital religious and rational interests in the doctrine of God are conserved by means of the conception of the divine transcendence, and the over-emphasis upon the

[1] See S. A. Cook, *E.R.E.* art. "Religion," ch. 31.
[2] Baron von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion.*

equally valid idea of immanence does not make for real understanding.[1]

Plotinus, we saw, maintains that to rise in the scale of being, to pass from the Soul-world to the Spirit-world, is to come into 'closer penetration' with other things; no longer does everything remain satisfied with its mutual exclusiveness and isolation from other things. To enter the Spirit-world is to join in more intimate harmony with the choir invisible, it is to become interpenetrative by other spirits and by the Great Spirit, and to interpenetrate them and It. The truth, then, of spirits is not to be impervious substances, but to be interpenetratible without losing identity. Uniqueness forbids identity, which incidentally is but a *logical* category, while it is perfected by union. There must be no depersonalisation of spirit in our zeal for the substitution of the Great Spirit. The Divine is immanent in the human, God is immanent in man, not only by a creature, Grace, not only by influence and activity, but by Himself, the Creator. The Great Spirit is the reality of particular spirits, being all that they are, and giving them all that they possess. Presence by immanence must be concluded by Presence by essence; man needs God Himself and no delegate, he is restless until he rests on the bosom of the Absolute God Himself, even God the Father.

God's immanence in man, by way of ethical qualities, disallows compulsion and constraint; co-operation and persuasion are the appointed means, the only possible means, in fact, of transforming him into His likeness.

Qui creavit te sine te, non salvabit te sine te.

This is at once man's glory and his greatness, it may be also his destruction and his doom.

Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine.

Baron von Hügel warns us of the danger of neglecting the transcendent reality of God, which is essential to any real spiritual life. He says there are two alternatives extant in recent controversy: Immanentism, which makes the entire religious

[1] See F. W. Butler, *Can we dispense with Christianity?*

and Christian development to spring from below and from the obscure depths of the human conscience; and on the other hand a doctrine which, from horror of Immanentism, perceives nought except the gift from without, the revelation formulated from above—authority addressing itself to a pure receptivity and a passive obedience.

Christianity comes neither *wholly* from *without*, extrinsecus, from afference, nor from within, from efference. These, he thinks, might fitly be called two kinds of *monophorism*.

This-world ends and the super-world ends enter into deadly conflict; the former seem to be sought for their own sake with no thought of a beyond, while the latter signify from this an entirely different orientation, a jealous tension against the competition of those this-world ends.

Here the continuity observable throughout the whole of the natural world has been violated, a false antithesis has been set up which can only result in antinomies innumerable. Christianity must be *incarnational*; religion must enter *all things*; it must and does make all meats clean, it goes out of itself to all activities of man. There must be no weakening of the transcendental movement of the soul—the God-ward movement—far less must there be any *substitution*; yet this implies as a basis the immanent movement.[1] Spiritual perception of what is *within* ourselves is but one power of the spirit, one direction in which it can fix its gaze; receptive intuition of what is *above* itself is equally important and equally essential, for it is by this *upward* gaze, this 'loving look,' that it maintains, and in maintaining strengthens, the transcendental bond which unites it to true and eternal Being.

Man's recognition of transcendent reality is primarily due to his moral and spiritual nature. Revelation alone enables him to apprehend God as transcendent, while the immanence of the divine within renders him capable of receiving the revelation. Since all breach of continuity between the transcendent and immanent reality is impossible and contrary to all known laws of God's working in the world, the revelation of the tran-

[1] See Baron von Hügel, *op. cit.*

scendent should intensify and transform the whole sphere of the immanent presence of the divine life in creation. Not only does He reveal Himself as The God of Deism, but "He must be conceived as ever present to sustain and animate the universe, which thus becomes a living manifestation of Himself; no mere machine, or book, or picture, but a perpetually sounding voice."[1]

God is immanent in spirits by His creative power, for in Him by His will and thought they physically live and move and have their being; He is transcendent in them only as they surrender themselves to the epiphany of His holiness. The human spirit has no other end than to be the home of the Divine, as the branch of the vine has no other end than to be filled with the life of the tree. Just in so far as man surrenders himself to the indwelling life of God does the Transcendent become immanent with him; just in so far as he puts on the likeness of the divine nature is he the epiphany of His character, the agent of His service, the sufferer of His pain, and the sanctuary of His rest.[2]

Some philosophers have insisted upon the transcendence of God, because this alone can preserve His *Personality*, which they seem to think vital to the conception of God, especially as it concerns the *religious* consciousness. Only by means of the affirmation of Personality in God can "the Supreme mean anything effective for us at all"; and an impersonal God or an intellectual 'principle' does not answer to the testimony of the moral consciousness. These are the words of C. C. J. Webb, and we must agree with him that God cannot be anything *below* what we understand as a *personal* Being, yet He may very well be supra-personal, by way of transcending all personality; for individuality consists in the partial nature of human consciousness, which is distinguished from the absolute all-embracing consciousness of God by its limited and fragmentary character. As we had reason to observe above, the Absolute Being, being all-inclusive, must necessarily differ essentially, as regards His fundamental nature, from what we know as personal beings; to reach the supra-personal Being of God we must pass through personality, not fall below it, and if we can have no experience

[1] J. R. Illingworth. [2] W. H. G. Holmes, *The Presence of God.*

of being that transcends personality, then the least inadequate term to apply to the Deity is to speak of Him as Personal, yet He is *toto genere* different from us.

Lotze's famous defence of a *Personal* God is well known. He sees the "Infinite Substance" and the "Absolute Idea" as but perversions of the living and real God. "The true reality that is and ought to be, is not matter and is still less Idea, but is the living personal Spirit of God and the world of personal spirits which He has created. They only are the place in which Good and good things exist; to them alone does there appear an extended material world, by the forms and movements of which the thought of the cosmic whole makes itself intelligible through intuition to every finite mind."

"In point of fact we have little ground for speaking of the personality of finite beings; it is an ideal, which, like all that is ideal, belongs unconditionally only to the Infinite, but like all that is good appertains to us only conditionally, and hence imperfectly. Perfect Personality is in God only, to all finite minds there is allotted but a pale copy thereof; the finiteness of the finite is not a producing condition of this Personality, but a limit and a hindrance of its development."[1]

Lotze, by his insistence upon the Personality of God, even at the expense of denying it to finite beings, preserves the transcendence of the Supreme from all contamination with the world. The final subordination of the metaphysical problems of the Absolute to the moral and spiritual needs of the religious consciousness must always tend to conserve the absoluteness of God. The advice to seek in that which *should be* the ground of that which *is* exalts ethics above metaphysics, but it is not free from its own dangers. The Absolute, or true God of all religion, transcends the antitheses of the moral consciousness as He transcends those between the logical and the metaphysical, the possible and the real.

In our anxiety to preserve at all costs the transcendence and personality of the Absolute we must not substitute a relative and finite being, a *primus inter pares*, a Spirit among spirits, for

[1] R. H. Lotze, *Microcosmus*, Bk IX.

Him Who is 'All in all.' "It is because our personality is limited and contingent that we find it easier to believe in *a* God than in God." Tyrrell maintains that "the fiction of God's infinitude and relativity is a necessity of man's religious life, but that the interests both of intellectual truth and of religion require us to recognise this fiction as such, under pain of mental incoherence on the one side and of superstition and idolatry on the other." "Perhaps we may say that the notion of a finite God is one that the moralist can never afford to forget, nor the metaphysician to remember."[1]

Should the ultimate analysis fail to arrive at any conception of the Absolute that transcends what we mean by a *Personal* God, then with Lotze that would be the least inadequate form under which to conceive Him; but if spiritual experience convinces us that personality can be transcended by the revelation of the super-essential Absolute, such as some philosophies of the Absolute and all the great mystics of every age have dimly apprehended, then it is not only legitimate, but our bounden duty to conceive Him under this highest form in which He has revealed Himself.

Personality is not surrendered and sacrificed on the advent of the true Absolute, any more than matter is sacrificed on the advent of life, or life sacrificed on the advent of consciousness; but being a lower form of God's Being, the task of personality is accomplished in enabling the pilgrim to advance on stepping-stones to his only true life in the All. Lotze leaves us guessing whether the God Who is at once the goal of philosophy and religion, of metaphysics and of ethics, is really personal in the sense that finite spirits are so. As compared with Him we are only pale copies; our finitude, being but a limit and hindrance to the full and perfect Personality of God, should scarcely boast of its capacity to form a parallel or an analogy to His infinitude. He leaves the way clear for a true philosophy of the Absolute, but not for many philosophies of Absolutism.

As with Lotze so with Plato, the importance assigned to 'the Good' led both of them in the same direction. In their respec-

[1] W. R. Inge, *Personal Idealism and Mysticism.*

tive theories of the relation of the Supreme to the created universe, God is never allowed to tabernacle in His Absolute Being within the world of forms. For Plato the 'Idea of the *Good*' is the highest category of all, the 'Idea of Ideas' is beyond existence, and takes its appropriate place as supreme monarch of the intelligible world, the world of ideas. The rich and varied world of material things is but a world of shadows, a world that veils us from the face of God. Bathed in the waters of Lethe, the soul of man yearns for its true and everlasting abode 'yonder.' Our birth, which is but a sleep and a forgetting, will only attain to fruition in so far as we seek the world of ideas, the heart's true home. In the transcendent realms alone can we reach the permanent and the lasting, where the transitory and the fleeting have vanished, where sorrow and sighing have fled away.

But none was so conscious as Plato of the necessity of correlating the world of ideas with the world of fact. Pure transcendence requires intermediaries, whether these take the form of angels, secondary causes or demiurges, logoi or aeons. Deism, both he and Aristotle perceived, was clearly an impossible doctrine, as the world in which we all, to some extent, 'live and move and have our being' is left on our hands unexplained. Reason must pervade and inform all things by virtue of her immanent activity; she cannot remain external, being herself creative of the world of forms. Plato's soul of the world, Aristotle's indwelling reason, as well as the Stoic world-soul, have all the same function to fulfil, they all postulate the felt necessity of transcending the harsh dualism of the 'here' and the 'beyond.'

The Logos of Christian theology, the creative Word and immanent Reason, has never been absent from man and from His creation. The Hellenic mind could not enter, in such an intense degree, into God's immanence in the world as did the early Fathers—Origen, Clement and Athanasius—who borrowed from it many of their doctrines, because their standpoint necessarily excluded such an appreciation of His intimacy with creation. It was only when Christianity joined hands with Platonism that

God's immanence became the very warp and woof of subsequent thinking. The transcendental aspect of His Being was preserved, and if possible God was exalted far above all heavens in a sense that Plato little dreamed, but this High and Holy One that inhabiteth Eternity condescends to dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit. So intense is His Presence that they could say: "God mingles with humanity as the salt with the sea, or the perfume with the flowers"; He was 'closer to us than breathing, nearer than hands and feet.'

The yearning of the human heart for its heavenly home could not be satisfied with the Hellenic intelligible world of ideas. "To Plato's senses, absorbed as they were with the glories of the transcendental sphere, where 'all sorrow and sighing shall flee away,' the wail of 'the man in the street' was inaudible, yet even in those early days the whole creation was groaning and travailing like

> An infant crying in the night,
> An infant crying for the light.

But because infant humanity had then 'no language but a cry,' if he heard it, he did not heed it. The cry of the modern world was: 'Woe is me, that I am constrained to dwell with Mesech, and to have my habitation among the tents of Kedar.' He felt that something more than Platonic transcendentalism was needed to satisfy the intellect, and soothe the Weltschmerz of the human soul."[1]

God both heard and heeded the 'infant crying in the night' and His answer was the Incarnation. Man grows tired of ceaselessly constructing ideal pictures of the spiritual world, he repeatedly discards the gods many and lords many of mythological creation and apotheosis, as they are found unable to satisfy the deepest needs and impulses of his life. He longs for God to reveal Himself by an Incarnational act; he longs to build his house upon a rock which will not fail him in his dire extremity; he finds no abiding city in anything short of the Absolute origin and end of all being and becoming. Incarnation combines all

[1] W. S. Macgowan, *The Religious Philosophy of R. Eucken.*

the values of Immanence and Transcendence. The soul of man, in its partaking of and going out towards the love of God, finds Him in Himself as possessing life and love in Himself.

Incarnation is the climax of immanence as God is revealed as Self-imparting; by His immanent Presence He is still separated as regards His *Person* from us, but in Incarnation He perfectly assumes human nature. The difference is in reality enormous between God as immanent and as Incarnate. In the former case He is inferentially obtained rather than experienced as such. God as Incarnate is an experience. Immanence partakes more of a philosophical theory, Incarnation of an experienced Presence.

Between the transcendent and immanent forms of the Divine Life there is perpetual intercommunication, the great without and the great within are constantly supplementing each other, the life that is above all things flows into the life that is in all things. The whole process of the world's development consists in receptivity of the incarnational acts poured out of the Divine Life in sacrifice and love, and in returning such acts in repeated self-dedication, obedience and love. Kenosis and plerosis continually fulfil each other; and this is not only the form that characterises the relation between God and His world, it is the eternal process that takes place within the Godhead itself, the former being but the type and copy of its archetype and reality, the latter.

As we have had occasion to remark before, limitation through self-estrangement is essential to the Godhead, without which It would have remained hidden, all things having no form in It. "May we not say that along one frontier of the Divine Being the infinite became limited; that without such limitation no existence would have become possible for archangels or amoeba? But if the created universe be a shore on which the ocean of Divine Being breaks, the ocean stretches out beyond all limit in the other direction."[1]

The Christian doctrine of God as perfect Love involves both the fruition of love and blessedness in Himself, by His continual

[1] J. H. B. Masterman, *The Incarnation.* (Three lectures.)

abiding in and with Himself; and also His going forth from Himself into creation, or by way of creation, to fulfil Himself, in respect of finite existence, in Revelation and Incarnation. If Self-communication is the mode of the Divine Life, if the Trinity represents a fundamental differentiation, as well as a fundamental unity, in the Godhead, God will reproduce this same divine process in all His works.

As thought and reason pass into speech and language in man, so the Transcendent Logos passes into Immanent Logos. God in Himself, while remaining always in Himself as the Absolute, manifests and reveals His nature, formerly by sign, symbol, and sacrament, latterly by Presence and Person. Immanent Logos can conduct us to the threshold of the sanctuary of the Presence, it cannot usher us into the Holy of Holies. Incarnation comes by revelation from above only, God in His Absolute Being must speak by an absolute and eternal act; the Incarnate One must be born "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

Immanence is prophetic of Incarnation and by it immanence is transformed from glory into glory. Incarnation is the sequel, the crown and consummation of Creation, for from the beginning God always longed for a form of self-expression that should completely and fully reveal His majesty, His goodness, and above all, His blessed Love.

In the Christian doctrine of the Being of God as Triune, we behold the attempt to surmount all those philosophical speculations regarding the Divine nature, that conceive Him as an Absolute Subject with no other, an Absolute Object without consciousness, an Absolute 'Neutrum,' which only possesses abstract identity, or as an Absolute Self-Consciousness. "The doctrine of the Trinity is the complete assertion that the God Who is thus manifested is truly manifested as He Absolutely is in Himself. It discloses the living quality of the Being and life of the Godhead, and gives it that determinate form which is gained by a revelation conveyed historically."[1]

In the LOVE of God as declared by Christianity and all spiritual

[1] F. W. Butler, *op. cit.*

consciousness, we can enter most profoundly into the mysteries of the Trinity in Unity. Transcendence and Immanence find in His Love their deepest ground, their final synthesis and harmony. Incarnation, therefore, which is the real movement of Divine Love, must reveal itself as both transcendental and immanental; the Logos must be before the world was, as well as the Light that 'lighteth every man coming into the world.' Transcendence forbids identification of the Logos with the world, immanence forbids a solitary Being engaged from all eternity in contemplating Himself and being satisfied with His own glory. There must be no deification of the laws and forces of nature, but of the lawgiver; likewise there must be no absolute gulf separating God from nature; there must be Incarnation. Immanence and Transcendence are both essential. The highest task of religious philosophy will always be that of effecting a synthesis of those complementary aspects of the Divine. "God over us" and "God in us" are complementary. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only Begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared *Him*." Here transcendence and immanence are both asserted.[1]

The author of the Fourth Gospel presents the drama of the Logos as a master musician ushers in his central theme; he peals forth his great chords with a voice of thunder, striking the transcendent note around which the whole drama will move, the whole composition will be woven.

The world's evolution is a gradual unfolding of the mystery hid throughout the ages, it is the progressive realisation of the implicit through revelation and evolution; but idealism should not be blind to the dynamic behind and beyond the whole process of the world's advance. The Logos is neither the *product* of evolution, nor is It for ever 'about to be'; but It is the *cause* and reason of the development of temporal and finite life; and being in Itself perfect and absolute, It forms the supreme reality after which, and in the likeness of which, the world wholly hopes to become. The Logos is at once evolution's beginning and end, its alpha and omega; It forms the transcendent context of the

[1] See J. S. Johnston, *The Philosophy of the Fourth Gospel.*

creation, the transcendent path of its evolution, and the transcendent goal of its aspiration.

In *Love*, then, as we have observed, shall we least inadequately comprehend the abysmal depths of the drama of the Logos; in *Love* can we most fully enter into the Divine Kenosis involved in creation, revelation, and Incarnation; in *Love* shall we finally fulfil by plerosis what He has appointed for us to do, and repose in ineffable calm upon the bosom of the Godhead.

"The world is God's Self-limitation—self-renunciation, might we venture to say? And so God is Love. And what must that world be that is worthy of such love? The only object of Love is just Love; it must, then, be a world that can love God. But Love is free: in a ready-made world then, it could have no place. Only as we learn to know God do we learn to love Him; hence the painful discipline of evolution, with its dying to live —the converse process to incarnation—the putting off the earthly for the likeness of God. In such a realm of ends we trust 'that God is Love indeed, and Love creation's final law.'"[1]

[1] J. Ward, *The Realm of Ends*.

CHAPTER V

THEORIES *of* INCARNATION

UP to the present our whole attention has been engaged in exploring the doctrine of Immanence, and complementary conceptions which arise out of the immanent activity of God in the world. In our philosophical introduction we observed that neither Pantheism nor Deism could allow any real immanence of the Transcendent divine in creation, Pantheism denying the legitimacy of the transcendent, and Deism denying the immanence.

Panentheism, which is the synthesis of Pantheism and Deism, opens the way to a true doctrine of immanence by allowing finitude to repose upon the bosom of infinitude without being annulled in so doing. It recognises that God is the all-transcendent context to the finite, being, in every way, beyond and above it, yet gives the finite a permanent stability in the infinite, as owing its whole being to the immanent reality within it.

Any absolute Monism or absolute Pluralism that is reached only by denying either immanence or transcendence cannot be the ultimate truth of the universe. Unity has plurality as its necessary complementary moment, and plurality has unity as its complement; neither has any independent existence, for each is comprehensible only through and by means of the other. Christian theology has long ago come to recognise that the problem of the relation of God to the world, as well as that of God to Himself, that is, the external and internal relations of God, simply cannot be thought out without positing diversity within the Divine Nature Itself. Philosophy is gradually becoming convinced that our final resting-place in thought can only be upon the bosom of some *Absolute*, whose main characteristic is that of a pure unity. Christian philosophy is the philosophy of the Absolute, for the God of Our Lord Jesus Christ is 'The Absolute'; the question of vital importance, however, is not whether God is the Absolute—He is—but in what way must we conceive this Absolute. What *sort* of unity belongs to God's Being? From philosophies of the Absolute alone,

unities innumerable have been forthcoming with the claim to be ultimate expressions of the fundamental nature of all reality. They have chiefly erred in desiring to state, with a certain amount of exactness and precision, the nature of One, that must for ever be surrounded with impenetrable mystery and unknowableness. Abstraction from a very finite and limited experience, and hypostatisation of results thus obtained, may wear the appearance of an Absolute; but such premature syntheses can only be but caricatures of the Supreme Being. Rather than present us with a God Who has faded in the light of common day, we prefer such a mystery as is undoubtedly contained in the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, which, silently fermenting in men's thoughts, produces its appropriate atmosphere, one of reverence, awe, and wonder.

Absolutism must rise to the philosophy of the Absolute, a very different thing, before it can claim to be in any sense a Christian philosophy; casting off its intellectual dress it must put on true spirituality should it wish to reveal the ground of all real being.

Spiritual Unity embraces multiplicity in abundance in the richness and fulness of its varied content, yet it transcends the multiplicity in the act of containing it. The world being neither illusion nor real being must be rooted in the Absolute; while the Absolute must manifest Itself outside Itself, since there happens to be a world. Transcendence guards us against the mistake of predicating real being to the creation, while immanence guards us from denying to the world any real being. Dualism being impossible, and monism being absurd, we are compelled to reach a conception that allows God to be the Transcendent Reality as Transcendent, and the world to be the form of His immanent reality, possessing real being in that measure in which He is thus immanent within it.

In our last chapter the study of the problem of immanence and transcendence formed, as we saw, a natural prelude to the greater problem of the Incarnation. What neither of those one-sided conceptions of God's relation to the finite could reveal, because each was an attempt *from below* to state a transcendental

relationship, has been made manifest *from above*. In Incarnation there is a synthesis of immanent and transcendent being; the Incarnate is at once the immanence of the Transcendent and the transcendence of the Immanent. In Incarnation, God as immanent is consummated in God in Himself, God as personally present. Immanence admits of degrees, for God can be more or less present, which varies with the receptivity of the medium, but Incarnation admits of none; God is here present as He is absolutely, and in Himself. Immanence is an adumbration of Incarnation, it is Incarnation in promise and prophecy; Incarnation is immanence, fulfilled, completed and crowned.

But if this is the relation between Incarnation and immanence, its relation to transcendence is of no less importance and significance.

Incarnation is an absolute revelation of Transcendent Being within the sphere of time and space. Immanence is the immanence of the transcendent, but Incarnation is the presence of the Transcendent. Before Incarnation, transcendent reality is interpreted in terms of immanent reality and of such partial revelations as can be imparted to man; it therefore assumes the form of an anthropomorphic reality. No absolute voice has as yet broken the silence and manifested *from above* the innermost heart and Being of God. In the Incarnation, God became Man; and it was man's part not to construct God, but to receive His revelation. God, the All-Transcendent, the Absolute, far above all heavens, had spoken; man need but hear and understand; for the eternally transcendent Being had tabernacled, in so far as this was possible, within His own creation, within the sphere of His own immanence.

Neither of the *philosophical* conceptions of transcendence and immanence can completely comprehend the religious one of Incarnation; but each is able to see that what they had been attempting to interpret, and had succeeded in only very inadequately adumbrating, has been fully revealed by the transcendent divine act of Incarnation.

Whenever a too exclusive emphasis was accorded to the transcendent, deism was never very far away with its rigid and

impossible gulf separating God from His world. Even Plato could see no abiding reality in the world of perpetual change and fleeting form. The intelligible sphere where the universal ideas reigned supreme, all breathing human passion far above, this was for him the only real world. Dualism lies in the wake of transcendentalism; for who can be very serious in his interpretation of a transient world which is at most but a shadow cast by the brightness of the sun above. The world of ordinary experience must shrink into insignificance before the world that reveals itself in the vision splendid; to be unable to correlate them is no great defect to any transcendental philosophy.

But if the transcendentalist had his own difficulties, the immanentist was not immune from the dangers of an equally one-sided standpoint. Denial of an extra-cosmic reality, of a reality free from evolution and change, tended to lead him towards pantheism. God and the world became inextricably identified, and in place of a dualistic philosophy an unreal monism appeared, which left no place for any evolution, progress, or development.

From both these extremes we are saved by the conception of Incarnation; and it will ever be the highest task of the philosophy of religion to synthesise both transcendent and immanent being in Incarnate Being; and to show how, in *Incarnation*, we behold the true secret and mystery of reality, which philosophy can only embrace by the imperfect concepts of transcendence and immanence, without ever arriving at a more fundamental synthesis.

This chapter is devoted to the briefest consideration of those theories of the Incarnation which have immediate reference to the main problem of the whole essay. By such a consideration we shall be better fitted to approach our main study of the Incarnation in relation to Immanence, and to take an extensive view of the whole subject of Incarnation.

The literature upon each of the following sections, which deal with the different approaches that have been made to the Person of Christ, is so full and exhaustive that it is only possible here to treat of each approach in the briefest terms, reserving the more important bearings of the Incarnation upon the doctrine

of Immanence to the subsequent part of the work. At the present day it is impossible to make an attempt to expound any problem in the field of Christology without a previous introduction, which recapitulates, to a certain extent, the divergent views that have been held concerning the Person of the Incarnate throughout the long course of the history of Christian doctrine.

Modern theological opinion is insistent that breadth of treatment alone in Christological discussion can save us from those errors into which, with our more extended outlook, we see previous ages to have strayed. The rapid advances of the critico-historical school of thought, with its original and unique attitude towards the sacred writings, combined with the light shed upon religious experience by the psychology of religion and the study of comparative religion, are bidding us seek the vital dynamic in religion and the interpretation of religious personality, not in any dogmatic external authority or utterances of bygone ages, but in the living internal spiritual consciousness itself. In the living religious experience alone is to be found all living and real religion; such an experience alone must ultimately form the touchstone of all inspired writings, all dogmas, all authorities. Intellectualism and pragmatism are both incapable of giving us any sound Christian philosophy, and we fear that the same verdict must be passed upon most forms of Absolutism.

The lesson that history has taught us in the past, and is still teaching us to-day, we cannot afford to neglect. In all the greatest problems that the human mind has attempted to solve, exactness, definiteness, and precision are purchased at the expense of truth. In the particular connexion in which we are here concerned, that of interpreting to this generation the Person of Christ, the Holy Spirit can hardly have been working in the world for nineteen hundred years in vain, and to neglect His teaching would therefore be the height of imprudence; yet neither is He speaking *to-day* in vain, nor is He speaking in the same accents as He did in any previous age; it would, consequently, be equally foolish to refuse to listen to His voice *now*. To those who hear Him speaking, conviction will receive the testimony of experience that He neither contradicts Himself,

nor does He repeat Himself; in other words, all His teaching is marked by continuity and newness. His eternal and gracious work, which is ever leading those who are sufficiently humble and sufficiently wise into all truth, is effected by taking of the things of Christ and declaring them unto us. No particular age, nor the totality of the ages, will exhaust the fulness of Him that filleth all in all; but each age will be a living member in the living body by contributing its own few grains of truth to the edifying of the whole body; each, moreover, in the measure in which it is able to grow up unto Him in all things, will bring out of its treasure things new and old.

It would be ambitious to think that our views, in respect of the attitude here adopted towards the Person of Christ, will recommend themselves to all; but it is hoped that these few remarks may have provided sufficient justification for a brief introductory chapter upon some of the only too well-known —not to say famous—aspects under which different writers, from earliest times, have conceived that eternal and real *act* of God, the tabernacling of the Word of Life among men.

We now proceed, without further prefatory qualifications, to mention, with a word upon each, those fundamental standpoints that have been taken towards the Incarnation.

(*a*) *The Logos.*

The term 'Logos' seems to have no Latin equivalent, to translate it is to lose half the meaning that the Greek word conveys. Verbum, Ratio, and Sermo, all emphasise an aspect of that many-sided word 'Logos' as used by the Greek philosophers. Eventually both the Latins and ourselves have decided in favour of Verbum when it means rather creative '*Word*' than 'Reason.' Goethe seems to have experienced a similar perplexity in giving an adequate and full meaning to the term. He wavers between 'word,' 'thought,' 'power,' and finally decides upon 'Act.'[1]

'Word' may express the thought of *concrete* reason as well as creative activity, there may be the elements both of *intellect* and of *will* contained in it, and therefore it would seem prefer-

[1] See W. R. Inge, *Personal Idealism and Mysticism.*

able to the other alternatives. Furthermore, in the sense in which the Evangelist employs it, his desire is to tell the world of the *Revelation* of the Logos; the inner relations of the Trinity are quickly summarised and dismissed, the external relations of the Logos to creation, culminating in the Incarnation of the Logos, are the real theme of his Gospel. It is not the potentiality of Reason, as yet unexpressed, that constitutes the message he has to deliver, but rather the actuality of Revelation, and finally of Incarnation. God has always been *speaking* the Logos, for it was through and by Him that all things were made that were made, but in the fulness of time He spoke the Logos Himself, and this was that eternal and real *actus* that men call the Incarnation.

The genesis of the Logos-conception has a long history with a parentage partly of Hebraic and partly of Hellenic origin. All that can be attempted here is to summarise, in a few words, the main features of the growth of the doctrine, until its final adoption and incorporation into the Fourth Gospel of our inspired text.

Tracing the Hebrew Logos-doctrine we find Genesis opens with the words "And *God said*, Let there be light: and there was light." How frequently the phrase 'the Word of the Lord' is met with; it is this 'Word' that forms the mediating link between the Supreme Being, Yahweh, and the world, when it becomes gradually felt that a too direct and immediate contact of God with creation tends to lesson the divine holiness and spirituality of that Name which is above every name.

But if the 'Word' is associated with creation, it is also a mediator of God's revealing activity to man. Being as yet but imperfectly conceived, the language of theophany and manifestation tended to foster a *personification* of the instrument of revelation. "The angel of the Lord, the name, the presence, the glory of Jehovah, are frequently spoken of as if they were half personal beings, and later, the Divine Kochmah or Wisdom attains an almost complete hypostasis."[1] The *nature* of the 'Word' is only in the process of gradual growth, men are feeling after a true interpretation, but sign and symbol are insufficient

[1] W. R. Inge, *Personal Idealism and Mysticism.*

and uncertain data upon which to build any positive and definite knowledge.

The Wisdom literature adds a *cosmic* note to the Logos-doctrine of the Old Testament. Already Hellenic influence is observable in the growth of the mediating 'Word,' where the confluence of God's activity and revelation of ethical nature with His attributes and essence is clearly traceable. With this new factor in the fluid conception arises a development with respect to its nature, but to ascribe *personality* to it would be as yet too premature a step in advance.

Johnston says that "the Book of Wisdom represents the high-water mark of the Wisdom speculation. In this book Wisdom is like one of Plato's archetypal Ideas, wavering between ideal and hypostatic existence." And again, "It is difficult to say how far actual personality is here ascribed to Wisdom. The description may be still only poetic or figurative; but the poetry is certainly crystallising into Theology."[1]

The author of this Book can speak of her (Wisdom) in high strains, he recognises her immanence in all things, even her degrees of immanence, varying in different things; and he also recognises her transcendence of all things, because she remains in herself, while penetrating by her pureness the whole world. "For Wisdom is more moving than any motion; she passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness. For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty....For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness. And being but one, she can do all things; and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new: and in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God, and prophets."[2]

The third and last phase of the Hebrew Logos-doctrine is found in the Memra or Word of the Targums. With the growth of the transcendence of God it was necessary that the mediator should assume some definite form; a being that was constantly

[1] J. S. Johnston, *Philosophy of the Fourth Gospel.*
[2] Book of Wisdom, ch. vii, *vv.* 24–27.

surrounded with a halo of obscurity, a being that was in part a semi-anthropomorphic creation and in part a theomorphic revelation; or once again, a being that hovered between apotheosis and hypostasis, could not but be the creation of a temporary and transitional phase of the primitive religious consciousness, destined before long to be replaced by a more satisfactory, because truer, conception of the Mediator between God and man. No little confusion reigned to determine the appropriate relation of this mediatorial Being's nature with respect to that of the transcendent God. At times He appeared as a distinct Person, at others as identical with God; no Greek metaphysics embarrassed that period with confusion of "Persons" and "dividing the Substance"; but we can discern, although dimly, the adumbration of the full doctrine of the Christian Trinity, which many centuries of thought and religious experience alone could exalt into an established and unshakable dogma.

Let us now trace in outline the parallel history of the Logos-doctrine as it grew in the Hellenic mind, and we shall observe the same obscurity attaching to the term as that which surrounded it in its Hebraic setting.

The first mention of the word 'Logos' appears in the philosophy of that profound thinker Heraclitus 'the obscure.' Behind the eternal flux of all phenomenal existence, behind the ceaseless stream of becoming and the strife in which all things exist, was the law-abiding and orderly Logos. It was the unifying principle giving order, life, light and reason, to the world's evolution.

We must share in the life of the Logos, we must draw our inspiration from its life-giving fountains before we awake to the real world in which we should desire to live. He laid stress upon the immanent reason and intelligence in the world without correlating this with a transcendent cause and a transcendent Being. "The Logos existeth from all time, yet mankind are unaware of it, both before they hear it and while they listen to it." It resembles our natural law in a religious context, its function seems to be to give harmony and steadfast purpose to the evanescent existence of material things. He attempts to synthesise the One and the many by this mediatorial work of the

Logos, which unites without destroying the manifold diversity of the world.

When the conception passes through the thought of Anaxagoras and Plato, immanence recedes in favour of transcendence, and the Νοῦς or Mind emerges, which is an immaterial principle, separated from the world yet performing the same office in it as the Logos of Heraclitus accomplished. Plato is able to say that the world is "a living and rational organism" and "the express image of the Supreme." It is, however, to the Stoics that we must turn to find the next chapter in the growth of the Logos idea. They blended the immanence of Heraclitus with the transcendence of Anaxagoras and Plato, emphasising the former rather than the latter. The Logos was the informing, sustaining, all-pervasive spirit in things and men; it was the soul of the living organism which abided in itself and of which the world participated. There is a clear recognition of the degrees in which all things partook of the Logos. Nature shared in immanent Logos, but man could hold communion with it, and thereby realise his kinship with all creation.

It is to the Stoics, moreover, that we owe the important distinction between the Logos ἐνδιάθετος and the Logos προφορικός, the unspoken thought, and the thought expressed in word and deed. Upon this clearly distinguished difference, Christian thinkers were given data upon which to speculate about the relation of the First and Second Persons in the Trinity, and the process on the Godward side that caused the act of creation, the development of creation through evolution, and the consummation of creation in Incarnation.[1]

The third and last stage of the Logos-doctrine in Greek philosophy culminates in Philo, the Jewish philosopher of Alexandria. All streams, both of Hebrew and Hellenic origin, met in him; but he was not a sufficiently great thinker to effect a complete harmony between the divergent lines of development upon which the Logos-conception, which was central to his thought, had flourished. On one side, he encountered the note of the Transcendent struck by Plato, the Jewish religion, the

[1] See W. R. Inge, *Personal Idealism and Mysticism*.

Wisdom literature, and especially the Memra-doctrine with its reverence for the *spirituality* of Yahweh; on the other, he could not afford to neglect the immanence of the Logos as held by the Stoics and Heraclitus. Philo adopts the familiar position of the mystics, calling God by such titles as pure Being, the inaccessible Absolute, the unchangeable eternal One. All predicates limit His Being, He can therefore best be described by negative attributes alone. The Logos is 'The Wisdom of God,' the whole Mind of God, the intelligible world, the Idea of Ideas; He is the Glory as well as the Darkness of God. Being the agent through Whom the world was created, He is in closest communion with God; yet for Philo, *personality* seems to be a doubtful quality of His nature.[1]

A yet more vital distinction between the Logos of Philo and that of St John is that, whereas in the case of the Evangelist, He becomes Incarnate, The Word becomes flesh, such an Incarnation was an impossibility for the Logos of Philo. Neither the Hebrew nor the Greek mind had advanced in their respective developments of the conception of the Logos sufficiently to enable them to formulate, even but dimly, the later doctrine of the Christian Trinity. Both wavered in their determination of the nature of this divine Mediator, for both the conception was but in a 'fluid' condition, for both He seemed to assume, at one time a derivative and secondary function in the relation of God to man, at another an identity with the Supreme Deity. Never, in either case, could He be said to have been definitely thought of as a hypostasis in the Godhead, such as was subsequently assigned to the 'Word made flesh.'

Our history of the term has now led us up to the time of its adoption by the author of the Fourth Gospel, and we can trace in this progressive evolution three stages: "the personification of the Divine Word in the Old Testament is poetical, in Philo it is metaphysical, in S. John historical. The Logos of S. John is not a mere attribute of God, but the Son of God existing from all eternity, manifested, in space and time, in the Person of Christ."[2]

[1] See W. R. Inge, *op. cit.*

[2] A. H. Bowman, *Christian Thought and Hindu Philosophy*.

From the earliest times obscurity had surrounded the nature of the Logos, the Mediator and Revealer of God to man. As the whole conception developed under the light shed by successive and progressive revelations, in the various forms of theophany, vision, voice, and philosophical intuition, difficulties felt in defining and limiting the term disappeared; but as veil upon veil lifted there remained veil upon veil behind. The problem, which was none other than that of exploring and making explicit the nature of God, continued in the early Church, when some of the greatest minds made their contributions towards the solution of the Logos-doctrine; it reappeared in the Mediaeval Church; and is at present the problem that both delights and baffles the intellects of the Church in all Christological thinking.

The greater light available to-day upon the mystery of the Being of God—for the Logos-doctrine is one attempt to approach this mystery—helps us to realise the difficulties of former ages, and also to realise why they *were* difficulties; but we are as far as ever from a satisfactory solution of those very obstacles of thought which were in early times found to be so insuperable.

The Logos-conception of the Nicene Fathers helps us to see the expression of "that which is and always will be the central truth of Christianity, namely, that in the life and character, the teaching and personality of Jesus Christ, the world has received the highest revelation of God." Let us, therefore, try to appreciate some of the conceptions they reached, in this more developed age, in their interpretations of the Person of Christ.

Justin Martyr sometimes seems to imply that the Logos was potential only before creation; if He cannot be *equated* with the Father, the Absolute God, Who alone is unoriginate, and if He is born by the Father's *Will* and serves the Father's purpose, this inclines to a subordinationist doctrine, such as would have delighted Arius. Justin, however, sees the danger and guards against it elsewhere by speaking of the Logos as a distinct Person, and other than the Father; he draws the analogy between our putting forth Logos without impairing the original Logos in the process of the procession, and the begetting of the Logos

by the Father. He preserves both the unity and fulness of the Godhead, while recognising the distinctions within It, and thereby satisfies the orthodox creed of Nicaea.

Professor Bethune-Baker thinks that neither Justin nor Tatian nor Theophilus has clearly conceived a hypostatic distinction in the being of God Himself: "the distinction is found *externally* in relation to the world, and there is danger, on the other hand, of the Logos being identified with God. His essence (*οὐσία*), as it were, rests eternally in God-immanent; his hypostasis is conceived only in the work of revelation." It follows that as a personal existence "the Logos is not really God, but only a manifestation of Him"; and we may endorse Loofs' words that "it is not God Who reveals Himself and Christ, but the Logos, the depotentiated God, a God who as God is subordinate to the highest God." A step more and we reach Clement of Alexandria's position. Whereas in the former cases the Logos, as a separate hypostasis in the Godhead, was not an essential but an economic distinction, so in Clement there seems to be a duality of Logoi. The Father-Logos as original and eternal, and the Son-Logos, as proceeding from the immanent Logos, are inclined to diverge so as to form two separate personalities. Clement erred by denying to the Incarnate Christ a place in the Trinity, former theories had erred by denying the eternity of the Trinity.[1]

Origen's important contribution to the doctrine is his view of the eternal generation of the Son by the Father. He saw that even if the Logos was begotten by the *will* of the Father, yet this does not involve any temporal context, as God is without arbitrariness, and what He wills that He *is*, or will is rooted in essence or being. In God willing and being are one and the same thing; the Son, therefore, is as much of the essence of God as of His will. He maintained the personality, Godhead and co-eternity of the Son with the Father, yet subordinated Him to the Father Who was the One sole source and fount of Godhead.[2]

[1, 2] See J. F. Bethune-Baker, *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine.*

Each writer who treated of the Logos-doctrine had his own ray of light to shed upon it, giving it a slightly different turn from those that had preceded him; and the whole discussion ranged around a few fundamental problems. Was God the Father the same identically as the Logos? To which almost invariably a negative answer was given. Was the Logos an eternal hypostasis in the Godhead? Was He the same as the Incarnate Logos? Was He the agent in creation? Was He a personal being? Was He essentially God? Of such a nature were the questions asked by the great thinkers who approached the Person of Christ from the side of the Logos-conception, and their solutions of them were not always consistent.

But if the inner relations of the Trinity were one aspect of the Logos-doctrine, the relation between Him and man was another that equally demanded consideration. The Christologian has two problems and two only to solve: How is Christ God and how did He become man? And perhaps they are more clearly related than a superficial observation would reveal to us. 'The Word was God' and 'The Word became flesh' are indissolubly bound together, in conjunction they constitute the whole of Christianity. God the transcendent Being far above the heavens is joined to the world in which He moves and abides by His immanent activity, by the mediation of the divine Word, Who is Himself a partaker both of the eternity of the one and the transience of the other.

In our discussion of the other theories of Incarnation, the *manward* side of the Logos-doctrine will receive our attention. As usually understood the doctrine generally moves upon the transcendent level alone, confining itself to the consideration of the *inner* relations within the Trinity, leaving the *humanity* of Christ to the other branches of Christology.

A word upon the Logos as implicitly or explicitly stated in the Bible must close our brief summary of the history and thought of this doctrine. By implication we can discover, in the theology of St Paul, an almost complete Logos-doctrine. So far is it from being the case that we are driven to make our choice between the Jesus of the historic narratives and the heavenly Christ of

the Pauline Epistles, that we can see in the development of doctrine by St Paul the complete and explicit statements regarding the Person of Christ, the universal and transcendent background of the particular historic Figure that tabernacled amongst us in Jesus of Nazareth.[1] St Paul's whole attitude towards the Incarnation, due, no doubt, to his peculiar personal religious experience, is one that frees it from all particularity, from all its historic settings, by the introduction of cosmic relations between Christ and the world. For him Christology assumes a cosmological aspect by transcending the limitations of place, time and thought. Christ is 'the image of the invisible God.' He preexisted 'in the form of God'; through Him all things came into being and are held together. He is the πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, and His reign is co-extensive with the world's history.[2] He transcends time, for His union with God the Father makes Him share in His eternity by essential nature; He transcends place by comprehending the universe without being thereby comprehended by it, Hebrew nationalism being altogether of subordinate importance; He transcends thought by containing within Himself the totality and fulness of the Divine attributes; He is primarily the Son of God and only secondarily the 'Messiah' of the Jews.

By participation in the life-giving Spirit of Christ, Christians are transformed into His likeness; the mystical doctrine of the continual birth of the Lord, Who is also the Spirit, in those who receive Him, can find ample confirmation in the theology of St Paul.

In substance, if not in name, this is the Logos-doctrine of the Fourth Gospel. For St John also 'The Word' was in the beginning with God, He participates in the Godhead of the Father from all eternity; the Divine Logos is God reflected in His own eternal thought; in the Logos God is His own Object. "This infinite thought, the reflection and counterpart of God, subsisting in God as a Being or Hypostasis, and having a tendency to self-communication—such is the Logos."[3]

[1, 2] See W. R. Inge: followed in the attribution of Logos-doctrine to St Paul. [3] H. P. Liddon, *Bampton Lectures*.

As in St Paul, He was the Agent in creation, for "all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made." No lesser Mediator was necessary to reveal the Supreme God to man; He had been the Being who was obscurely adumbrated by the old dispensation in theophany, vision, and prophecy.

In the Logos abided the life and the light of men, and those who, having listened to His voice, received it, could truly be said to be 'born of God'; having put on the likeness of the Logos, they were in the process of being transformed into the image of God's Son, as St Paul says.

For both the Apostles the Logos is divine, transcendent, and in His own Being absolute and essential, apart from the world history. For both He is the principle, pattern and prototype of creation, which is the arena where the eternal truths immanent in God find their illustration and manifestation. For both He has always been in the world, leading His people onwards by the dim light of sign and symbol, until the fulness of the time arrived for His personal Incarnation. Knowledge of God came through receptivity of the life and light that had their original source in Him, both in pre-Incarnation and in post-Incarnation times. Both saw in the Incarnate Logos the consummation of Hebraism and Hellenism, the fulfilment of eschatology and Messianism on the one hand, and of the soaring speculations of the Greek philosophers on the other. In the Logos as Incarnate, God as Transcendent and God as Immanent had attained a perfect synthesis; but only if the Mediator between God and man were at once very God and very Man was such a true synthesis possible; only if, while being completely supernaturalised and identified with the Logos of the Father, this same Jesus remained also truly Jesus—that is, that He preserved "a human mind and a human will bound to a human body, to sense-stimulation, to history and institution, to succession, time and space, only so can He be our Master and our Model, our Refuge and our Rest."[1]

[1] Baron von Hügel.

(*b*) *Kenosis.*

As we have observed in our treatment of Logos-Christology, the whole doctrine moves upon a transcendental plane. The *internal* relations of the Godhead, and their respective functions in revealing to man divine truth, constitute the primary and all-important problem of the august conception of the Logos. It was reserved for other branches of Christology to approach the lesser, yet equally difficult, questions relating to the *à priori* possibilities of an Incarnation, and the speculative construction of the Person of Jesus Christ as God Incarnate.

The Kenotic theories of Incarnation are one and only one attempt, along quite definite lines, to approach the question of 'how is any Incarnation, granting such an act to have taken place, possible?' Without some *kenosis* of the Son as unlimited Logos of the Father, no Incarnation seems either real or possible; hence we are led to the problems involved in Kenotic Christology (and they are many) with the conviction that the adherents of this interpretation of the Person of Christ possess one of the keys to the solution of the mystery of His ineffable Being.

In contrast to the Logos-doctrine which arose, in its inception, from the experiences of men who were feeling after the most adequate categories in which to conceive the Being of God, the *Kenosis* has a far shorter ancestry. Not until men were convinced that the Incarnation was a reality did they attempt to account for its possibility from the ground of the Absolute; not until they had experienced its life-giving influence within their own lives did they perceive the necessity, or receive the inspiration, to embark upon the task of navigating the shores of the Infinite God in search for a clue to solve this miraculous divine interposition—for so it appeared to them—within the world of the commonplace and the ordinary.

The Logos-theologians sought to elucidate the internal and innermost relation within the Divine Being; their problem was to elucidate, although most of them were unconscious of it, the *essential* nature of Spirit, as it is in and for itself. The Kenotic theologians were interested in interpreting the external relations of God to the world, as revealed under a new aspect by the

appearance of Christ, Himself perfect God and perfect Man. Almost without exception they took as their *data* for further discussion the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, or the Triune nature of God, the very problem that so perplexed the Logos thinkers; and further, the union in Jesus Christ of God and Man. For them Godhood and Manhood were by nature different, and their problem was the synthesis of these in One Incarnate Life. Let us, at this point, proceed to examine the general considerations of the problem.

Putting aside all philosophical theories that assert any absolute *identity* of God with man, and maintaining the essential deity of Christ, as Incarnate, as well as His essential Manhood, then, along with these propositions, we must also think of some abnegation of the glory, majesty and prerogative of Deity that were His by right of nature. Before such an act as Incarnation could have taken place some 'moral act in the heavenly sphere' seems to have been a necessary precondition. "No human life of God is possible without a prior self-adjustment of deity." It is not given to the speculative intellect to lay bare all the innermost workings of the Divine Mind, we 'cannot watch God as He becomes Incarnate,' yet Dr Mackintosh thinks the alternatives before us are but few. "Once it has been made clear that Christ is God—since redemption is as typically a Divine work as creation—the possible alternatives are few. It may be said that He acquired Godhead—which is pagan. Or that He carried eternal deity unmodified into the sphere of time—which is unhistoric."[1] Either of these alternatives forfeits the whole problem of Kenosis, by rendering Incarnation quite meaningless. The former was contradicted by experience, the latter by reason; the former denied Christian faith, the latter metaphysic. The Son of God although born into a new order ever remained at the Father's side; although robed to the eye of sense with flesh and blood was ever radiant to the eye of Spirit with the splendour of the eternal God. While He continued to be eternally, He began to be in time. Confusion of *forma Dei* with *forma hominis* is fatal to any comprehension of Kenosis, while

[1] H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ.*

rigid separation of 'Deus' from 'homo' is fatal to any comprehension of Incarnation.

The 'Word' is still the Word when we are vouchsafed to behold it in the Incarnate Word, and Man is still man when we behold the ideal Man in the hypostasis of Man. In the union of lowliness and exaltation, humility and glory, meekness and majesty, the Godhead is not changed by its compassion, nor is the manhood swallowed up by its acquired dignity. Within the world of sense and reason we obtained but an imperfect analogy to the laws that govern the world of spirit, although the same laws and principles are in operation in both realms. In the spiritual world, as we have had occasion to remark in the section on mysticism, all concepts are 'fluid,' interpenetration, intimacy, and synthesis, being substituted for separation, rigidity, and analysis. Viewed *spiritually*, therefore, God could be completely in Christ by way of transcendence, while Man could be completely in Him by way of immanence. In the Person of Jesus Christ we may see the visible measure of the invisible Father, which is God as absolutely and completely as God can be in any created universe. The transition from absoluteness to relativity involves some kenosis, because the created world is not absolute, finitude does not reflect infinitude; but the relative in Christ, as in creation, is subordinate to, and a passing 'moment' in, the absolute. The relative, finite, and temporal is completely immanent in the absolute, infinite, and eternal, possessing nothing that is not derived through dependence upon its ground, source, origin and end; while the absolute is completely transcendent over, as well as completely immanent, but only by way of transcendence, in the relative. In the supreme instance of the Incarnation, Christ's utter dependence upon the Father was the consequence of His Godhead; complete reciprocity of Being as Incarnate only mirrored the Nature of the Divine Life, wherein love attains continually its ineffable fruition. In this Sole Example complete immanence was the *consequence* not the *cause* of His Godhead, He was God *à priori* not *à posteriori*, God by nature and right, not by adoption and grace. But this superiority of the Father to Jesus, in the way of independence

to dependence, does not *lessen* His essential Godhead. "The superiority of God to Jesus does not mean that He reserves anything to Himself; on the contrary, He wholly conveys Himself to Jesus, making Him sovereign of the entire world. What it does mean is that God is everywhere and at each point the Origin, the Giver, the Foundation; while Jesus is the obedient and receptive organ of His will."[1]

As Transcendent, God is greater than the Incarnate God, He is not only *totus intra omnia* but *totus extra omnia*; He transcends all that is, and all that is not, being quite outside the category of *existence*, because He is the beginning and end of all existence. In Christ, as Incarnate, God has as fully, completely, and perfectly manifested Himself as man, ideally conceived, can bear; in Him bestowal and receptivity can go no further. Man has realised his very nature *sub specie aeternitatis*, he has breathed the pure atmosphere of Godhead. Of God in His *Absolute* Being no revelation is possible upon any plane lower than that of the uncreated, God the Father cannot tabernacle in the world of forms; this is synonymous with denying *any revelation* without mediation of the Godhead; 'no man hath seen God at any time.'

Between the Logos uncreated, unlimited, incomprehensible, and the Logos born in time, limited by conditions of created existence, and made comprehensible to us men, kenosis must have a necessary place. But our conviction is not based solely upon *à priori* and philosophical grounds. The empirical evidence afforded by a study of the historic narratives of the life of Christ bears witness to the fact that His whole experience as Man was the result of one vast self-humiliation. We learn that He passed through physical, mental and spiritual suffering; that He experienced the desires, yearnings, temptations, thoughts and feelings of man; that He felt the constant and intense need of perpetual communion with His Father; that He accepted His destiny on the Cross as willed by this same Father.

Throughout His life, itself a living sacrament of the Presence, the Divine was revealed in and through the human, not above

[1] Lütgert.

and in spite of it. Every act, every thought, every motive, was a genuinely and truly human act, thought, and motive, it was also divine. "In His human life on earth, as Incarnate, He is not sometimes, but consistently, always, in every act, in every detail, human. The Incarnate never leaves His Incarnation." Our ignorance of what God manifest in the flesh would or could do precludes us from prophesying, upon any *à priori* considerations, what relations would obtain between His Godhead and His Manhood. Every metaphysic of His Person must take its stand upon the facts, slight though they be, of the historic narratives; and every philosophy of the Godhead, to whatever height it may soar in its theories of the Absolute, must be continually testing its doctrines by the touchstone of the Gospels, and receiving the sanction of Him Who alone is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Turning now to the history of the Kenotic theories of the Person of Christ, we find the first reference to the doctrine made by Irenaeus. He holds that the identity of Jesus with the Logos was complete, but during the Kenosis the Logos, as Second Person of the Trinity, was in abeyance in order to allow free play of the manhood. The potential presence of the divinity occasionally revealed itself by coming to the aid of the human nature.

Origen insisted upon the impassibility of the Godhead by making the Incarnation the divine means through which the unsullied and dazzling light of the Deity could become apprehensible by mortal men. His view may be compared with that of St Paul, who is also found saying that the 'babe' in Christ must be taught the Passion and Death of his Lord before he is fitted to receive the higher wisdom of His eternal power and divinity. The earthly life of Jesus is the ladder upon which the aspirant to perfect knowledge must mount until he is in view of the very highest. It is only when we reach St John that we have a portrait of Christ in which every act, every event, and every word, are symbolic and sacramental of eternal and immutable verities that have their being in the Divine Nature alone.

This seems to be Origen's standpoint regarding the Kenosis,

for he writes: "Out of condescension to such as cannot look upon the dazzling radiance of the Godhead, He becomes as it were flesh, being spoken of in corporeal fashion, until he that received Him in this guise, being lifted up little by little by the Word, becomes able to contemplate also what I may call His inherent Godhead."[1] Such a view is never very far away from Docetism, for the humanity of Christ appears to be but a veil to conceal His divinity, being rather for paedagogic reasons than the result of an inherent spiritual necessity.

It is to Hilary that we owe the fullest and most reasoned expression of the Kenosis; formerly it received but an incidental treatment, being alluded to, on occasions, merely to confute certain heretical theories concerning the life of Jesus Christ.

Hilary preserves the identity of Person in both 'the form of God' and 'the form of a servant,' while drawing a distinction between the two modes of being. He renounced the 'forma Dei' sufficiently to take upon Himself the 'forma servi,' while remaining Deus all the time. "The renunciation of the self was such that remaining 'Spiritus Christus' He became 'Christus homo.'"

By nature and essence He abides substantially God; but being by His nature God, this does not confine Him to any particular mode or form of existence. In the Dialectic, Hegel has a category of essence and appearance that seems to be related in somewhat the same way; in Indian philosophy Brahmā has many masks in which He conceals His illusive Being. God is not limited to one mode of existence; in Christ He has contracted the Divine form into the conditions governing the human form. "He 'tempers' Himself to the form of human fashion. He is always foregoing the *forma Dei*, while all the time the divine *natura*, which is absolutely His, is—under that limitation —in operation for the benefit of mankind."[2]

In briefest outline these are the theories held in the earliest history of Christology respecting the Kenotic interpretation of the Incarnation.

[1] J. F. Bethune-Baker, quoted in *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine*, p. 297.
[2] J. F. Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.* p. 298.

Our retrospect now takes a huge leap to the more modern approaches to the doctrine; hereafter the treatment of those who have dealt with Kenosis will follow not the chronological but the doctrinal classification. Writers whose theories resemble each other will form one category and be considered under a single head, whatever their respective ages may have been.

The *locus classicus* of Kenoticism has perhaps received its expression at the hands of Thomasius, and was carried to an extreme in one direction by Goss and Godet. Of recent writers A. M. Fairbairn would appear to be one of his disciples, holding, as he does, the legitimacy of the division of the attributes of the Godhead into those that relate to the internal and external Being of God.

In the view of Thomasius the Kenosis relates to the Logos pre-incarnate, and in His absolute Being, not to the Incarnate Christ. Renouncing all those relations that appertain to the Logos *ad extra*, He limited Himself to undergo a veritable human life, exchanging, in the pre-temporal act of humiliation, the Divine eternal self-consciousness for the divine-human and limited self-consciousness.

Outside the life of the historic Jesus there existed no operation of the unlimited Logos. To the rejoinder that his theory affected the relations within the immutable Godhead, he fell back upon the distinction between those attributes which are essential and those that are relative, those without which God would not be God, and those that arise in the relation of God to a created universe. The former he held to be those of holiness, love and truth, which were constituents of Godhead; the latter, omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience, may be relinquished without impairing essential Deity. This expedient of sundering the attributes of God in order to account for the apparent lack of some of these in Jesus, while yet retaining His Godhood, cannot lead to anything but confusion. Furthermore, it would seem that this classification of attributes into those that are essential and non-essential is infected throughout with arbitrariness. The members of the two categories should be determined *à priori* by their innate characteristics; but is it not rather

the case that the principle underlying the division was obtained from the *à posteriori* ground of the consideration of the life of the historic Jesus? What *were* said to be the *essential* attributes of the Godhead could only have been derived from the observation of those that were actually manifested in the presence of Christ on earth; while those that He certainly lacked, and yet belonged to God absolutely, fell into the category of the non-essential. Behind the whole theory lay the presupposition that in Jesus we saw God; what should have received determination upon the ground of pure reason, from the known fundamental nature of the Absolute, and thereby formed a fitting context into which the Incarnate life would have come as a keystone, only possessed empirical origin, which can never interpret any empirical fact.

Dr Mackintosh indicates another defect in this erroneous divorce or separation of attributes. It is only by assuming the world is not eternal that the term 'relative' holds. But should it have had a temporal beginning, nevertheless, the so-called physical attributes must be pronounced as equally essential as holiness or love. "Each is a necessary determination of Godhead." "In short, we cannot think away the relative attributes of God without at the same time thinking away the relation. But this holds not of God merely, but of all subjects whatsoever. Dispersion into the colours of the spectrum is not essential to sunlight as such, but so soon as we use a prism this relative attribute of light cannot but appear."[1]

Goss disallows the retention by Christ of some attributes while He relinquished others. For him Incarnation involves the abnegation both of the essential and of the relative attributes. The Kenosis was an extinction of His self-consciousness as God absolutely which He only gradually regained through the human process of growth and development in the course of His earthly life. Respecting the internal relations of the Godhead, Goss allows a temporary interruption, since he regards the normal state of the Divine Life to be in abeyance during Incarnation.

[1] Benson, *Die Lehre von der Kenose*, p. 125. Quoted by H. R. Mackintosh.

The eternal generation and the cosmic functions exercised by the Logos were suspended.

He is followed very closely by Godet who is found saying that, as regards the filial *state* of the Son, this was forfeited through the Kenosis implied in Incarnation, while the filial *consciousness* was acquired during the process of growth of Jesus. In his approach to an interpretation of the relations subsisting between God and the world pending the cessation of Christ's filial state, he preserves the fluidity of the distinctions in the Godhead, and thereby guards himself against the charge of tritheism, which tends to forget the most important fact that wherever any of the Persons of the Godhead are present and active, there all the Persons are likewise in operation. Holding with Goss to the temporary suspension of the cosmic function of the Logos, he says that "when the Logos descends into the world, there to become one of the beings of the universe, the Father can enter into direct relations to the world, and Himself exercise the functions of Creator and Preserver, which He commonly exercises through the mediation of the Word."[1]

The last writer whom we shall mention that followed Thomasius in his distinction of the immanent and relative attributes is Fairbairn. If he has little possessing original value to add to the doctrine, yet his presentation of the position is somewhat unusual, especially in connexion with his use of the terms 'God' and 'Godhead.' Having stated that humiliation in some form is essential to any reality of Christ's humanity, to any real Incarnation, and that His surrender and assumption are equal and coincident, the latter being understood, however, through the former, he proceeds as follows: "We may express what it means by saying that the Incarnation, while it was not of the whole Godhead, only of the Son, yet concerned the Godhead as a whole. And this carries with it an important consequence: Physical attributes are essential to God, but ethical terms and relations to the Godhead."[2] The physical are under the command of the ethical, or "God acts as the Godhead is." "The

[1] H. R. Mackintosh.
[2] A. M. Fairbairn, *Christ in Modern Theology*.

external alone might constitute a Creator, but not a Deity; the internal would make out of the Deity a Creator. We may say, then, that what makes the whole life of Deity is the regulation of His physical by His ethical attributes, or the limitation of God by the Godhead."[1] The Christian doctrine of the Trinity does not permit us to draw any sharp line of division between the Persons of the Godhead, nor to set any over against the others, or the whole, in such an antithetical relation as Dr Fairbairn here appears to do. The first Person of the Blessed Trinity, being the sole Fount of Godhead, embraces within His own Being, not only potentially but actually, the whole Triune Majesty. Rather than speak of God as a member of the Godhead, albeit the first member, it would be preferable to identify Him with the Godhead. It is not permissible to assign to God an absoluteness which is, in effect, merely the false absolute of Hegel, while the true Absolute is predicated only of the Godhead. Christian theology understands by the term 'God' the final resting-place, not of thought, volition and feeling, not of Truth, Goodness and Beauty alone, but also of the spiritual and divine consciousness; as Plotinus might have said, it is a vain quest to seek any object beyond God, for not even the intuitive perception of spirit, not even the ecstatic rapture of the spirit in love, can attain to the contemplation of the Divine Being. In a word there is *nothing* 'beyond.'

The distinctions in the One, formulated by the necessity of interpretation of the Christian experience, fall within, not outside, the nature of God. The *Godhead* is the revelation of a Trinity within the Unity, but it is always *within* the Unity, being the expression of the Nature of the Unity.

Fairbairn proceeds to deal with the difficulty arising from the possibility of the limitation of the physical attributes of God in Incarnation. He points out that we are presented with precisely the same problem in the relation of God to creation. "The physical universe circumscribes the ubiquity of God; the divisions of time annul for us His eternity. There is, in truth, no difficulty involved in His union with human nature,

[1] A. M. Fairbairn, *op. cit.*

that is not equally involved in His relation to material nature, which, however vast, is not so near the Infinite as man, and however old, has not so much of eternity within it as his mind."[1] As many thinkers of former ages have observed, the difference, in this respect, between Incarnation and Creation is only one of degree; while the latter effects a limitation by its lower and lesser order of being, the former does so by the essential nature of human consciousness, and the accompanying condition of that consciousness. Incarnation, being the crown of creation, and mediating God through ethical and spiritual channels, demands a lesser kenosis than does creation. Before the manifestation of goodness, holiness and love, which spoke to the world in the Person of the Incarnate God, nature's voice speaking in tones of immensity and power must keep silence, and pay its homage in mute adoration. In Christ we behold "The fulness of Deity framed in the ring of humanity. Not unbounded Divine, but only this as limited by the human, not omnipresence but blessed presence, 'he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father,' not omniscience but revelation to babes, not omnipotence, but the infinite power of love, 'all power is given to Me in heaven and on earth.'"[2] "In Him humanity was realised before God and revealed to man; in Him God was revealed to man by Godhood being realised before him."

In this connexion, where Incarnation is seen to be the final revelation of the same continuous process begun in Creation, it will be relevant to touch upon the theory put forward by W. L. Walker.

He sees the *temporal* kenosis in Christ as the symbol of an *eternal* kenosis within the Godhead, which constitutes the Divine movement of the life of God. It is the expression, in terms of time and space, of the innermost nature of love, the highest activity of Spirit. Christ is the culminating point of 'creation's final law.' He is the ideal of the world's evolution as well as the dynamic that urges it to realise the purpose underlying its being. Only by a *process* of self-realisation can we ever see God becoming man—One Who is at once of us and not of

[1] A. M. Fairbairn, *op. cit.* [2] Martensen.

us, One Who in being Man transcends Man. Such a realisation "is involved in the very idea of the Logos or Son as distinguished from the Father, and in the thought of God's immanence in the world, if there is any real meaning in that thought at all. It implies, not a temporal, but an *eternal kenosis* in God, and His self-realisation in the world, not as the result of physical processes merely, but of an ethical movement through the Spirit also. And it is not merely a vague universal incarnation in man that we thus reach, but a special unique Incarnation of God as Son in Christ. It is only by this conception of the Incarnation as *a process of self-realisation* in humanity by God as Son that those difficulties, felt to be so formidable, can be met, and Christ be seen to be at once God and man."[1]

The world but reflects in miniature the Kenosis in God, a process by which He passes out from Himself in self-estrangement to return to Himself again in Absolute Spirit. But Mr Walker does not make it clear how we are saved from what he styles the "vague 'universal' incarnation" in all men; nor how, in the unique instance of Christ, we have God as Son, and that it is through Him that we must approach God, being aided by the Spirit which is mediated through the Son. In spite of his theory of eternal kenosis no writer could be farther than he from the Christology of Hegel, where *universal* incarnation appears as the truth of the particular Incarnation in Christ; but we suspect his divergence from the great Absolute Idealist has its ground rather in faith than in reason, rather in Christian experience than in dialectical metaphysics. Throughout his work there is no satisfactory explanation of the difference between his view and that of universal incarnation—and the difference is vital—nor does the latter anywhere receive definite refutation.

Let us now pass to the consideration of the Kenosis as viewed by Professor H. R. Mackintosh in his work on *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ*.

Within God's love lie the conditions both of His absolute relations to the world and His relations in His Incarnate life in humanity, which involve limitations as the result of Kenosis.

[1] W. L. Walker, *The Spirit and the Incarnation*.

Repudiating the denial of any attributes to the Son as Incarnate, he yet suggests that they may be transposed, so that they function in new ways and assume new forms of activity, being readjusted to the new condition of the Subject. Christ may be regarded as One Who possesses "*all* the qualities of Godhead in the form of concentrated potency rather than of full actuality, *δυνάμει* rather than *ἐνεργείᾳ*." In the 'form of God' His intelligence was intuitive, complete, and embraced all things simultaneously, but in the sphere of space and time, this became discursive, analytic and progressive.[1]

His omnipotence is always morally conditioned by His love, and is ever the passive instrument executing the behests of love. "The limitation of His Power was 'His intensest concentration' or 'His fixed purpose with the world.' The historic Jesus possesses a power that we feel to be akin to the absolute power of God, yet for the period of His life on earth, this assumes a subdued appearance." "It is not omnipotence simpliciter, but it is such power within the human limits as we feel to be akin to almightiness and prophetic of the hour when the Risen Lord should say: 'All power is given ME in heaven and in earth.'"[2]

By Incarnation the Presence of Christ was bounded to the conditions of particularity, that it might subsequently by its universality fill all things. The Presence somewhere and once was the prelude to the same Presence everywhere and always. As timeless truths may enter into the context of temporal facts, or have a historical setting; and as eternal values may appear under transient and changing conditions; so the Presence of Christ, when regarded historically and factually, may be limited by the 'here' and the 'now.' But when regarded in respect of its validity and value It transcends all finite limits by its characteristics of universality and eternity, being superior to, and independent of, the mundane categories of time and space.[3]

Incarnation reveals "the personal presence of God in One Who is neither omniscient nor ubiquitous nor almighty—as God Absolute must be—but is perfect Love and Holiness and Freedom in terms of perfect humanity."

[1, 2, 3] See H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ*.

Such a potentiality, argues Dr Mackintosh, is not compelled to regard the Godhead of Jesus Christ as an acquisition. Continuity of Personal life with God remains throughout, while in Him there exists eternally all that Jesus is to gradually realise through the process of development in time. "What Christ is by potency, with a potentiality based in His personal uniqueness, God is actually for ever. From beginning to end there is no breach of personal continuity, nor any ascent of bare manhood to a greatness it has neither right to hold nor power to wield."

This potentiality, which is the immediate and necessary consequence of the Kenosis, continued throughout the earthly life of Jesus, but it does not signify that the Divine was not present and in operation in Him, it was so present and active but in a *subdued* form. The witness borne by the historical narratives of His unique consciousness of the relation subsisting between Himself and 'the Father' is sufficient to convince us of the presence of the Divine within.[1]

For the initial act that rendered any form of humiliation of the Son possible, we must turn to the eternal and transcendent relationships in the Godhead. If, with Mr Walker, we may say that the whole of creation is but typical of an eternal Kenosis which forms the very living unity of God, and that Incarnation is the culminating point in that process, yet it is also an *act* of God that had a beginning and had an end in time. "The Son, we must suppose, has infinite power of self-determination over Himself in His divine capacity, and as pure Logos of Deity He creates and sustains the presuppositions and conditions of His revelation of Love." But if the Incarnation has its origin in the eternal counsels of God, it has its fulfilment in the world of time, change and mutability; if the underlying and timeless Ground of the Divine Drama is a pre-mundane and transcendent *act*, yet this can only find expression on earth in a life which is dedicated in every detail to the will of the Heavenly Father. The pre-temporal act was the necessary prelude to the temporal life, but the act of giving is of the same infinite value as the act of being given, the act of God is as precious as the life

[1] See H. R. Mackintosh, *op. cit.*

of Christ, and both are the consequences of that love which constitutes the innermost essence of the Triune Majesty.

Of moderately recent Christologies, Dr Weston's *The One Christ* and Dr Forsyth's *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, emphasise these two aspects of Kenosis. The former writer says that "the Logos by an act prior to Incarnation and as unlimited Son of God, so willed to live a life on earth that within it He limited Himself only to the fullest possible revelation through manhood, and restrained all Divine acts. The initial act of self-sacrifice belongs to eternal relationships, while His continual obedience is the expression, in terms of humanity, of the eternal and primary act and is based upon His limited self-consciousness or Logos in manhood."[1] Professor Mackintosh seems to agree, for he thinks that the prior Divine act was one that for ever accomplished the whole process of Kenosis involved in the Incarnate life. There was no *continual* restraint, by repeated acts of volition, of His unlimited and Divine powers as Logos of God, while dwelling on earth as Man. "The acceptance of human relationship—to nature, to man, to God—belongs to the eternal or transcendent sphere, as a definitive settled act; it is not something consciously and continuously renewed in time. What *is* continuous with the decisive act of self-reduction is the moral quality of the life on earth, the permanent self-consecration of Jesus' will. But the self-limitation, transcendently achieved as a single, final deed, inaugurates a permanent condition or state of life, amid circumstances of change and suffering once for all accepted."[2]

The final aspect of Kenosis that will here receive our attention, and one that bears a resemblance to the last treated problem above, relates to the distinction between the Logos and Jesus. The view held by Gŏss and Godet goes to the extreme of admitting a suspension in the respective functions of the Trinity during the Incarnation, thereby, it would seem, leading to the necessary conclusion of a subordination doctrine of the Son, even as Logos of God, since cosmic relations remained unimpaired by the alteration. To allow the substitution of the

[1] F. Weston, *The One Christ*.
[2] H. R. Mackintosh, *op. cit.*

Father for the Son in these respects, during the life on earth, is to border on Sabellianism.

All views that deny any relation between the Logos and Jesus Christ, deny also any *Incarnation* of God in Jesus of Nazareth. They may admit that we are presented with an example of God's supreme, unique, perhaps final, *immanence* in man; but they are compelled to deny the *absoluteness*, in contradistinction to the *finality*, of Christianity. They are compelled to deny His identity with God. They are unable to interpret His invitation 'come unto Me.'

The third approach to this problem is to regard the Logos as truly present and Incarnate in Jesus, as well as omnipresent and filling all things by His universal cosmic relations with the universe. He is 'totus in carne' and 'totus extra carnem,' but His operations proceed in each case from different foci of consciousness. Although the criticism urged against the Immanentists cannot be equally urged here, the Logos not being '*wholly*' in any other man, yet the analogies drawn from the phenomena of multiple personalities must be regarded with grave suspicion. Recent medical evidence has shown us how these alternating personalities can, under proper treatment, be finally sublimated into the pure ego, which remains identical throughout all abnormal changes.

The somewhat similar attempt of Dr Sanday to place the seat of the Divine in Christ in the sub-conscious realms of personality is fraught with its own dangers. Over this dark borderland of existence where, in our present state of knowledge, only a dim light guides our steps, it must always be hazardous to commit great problems to its keeping, and all results can only possess the value of tentative conclusions.

In general, concerning this whole question of speculation, unsupported by sufficient historical data, we may profitably heed the caveat uttered by Professor Mackintosh, for he says that "St John does not even know what is meant by the Word Incarnate without looking at the story of Jesus; and we may therefore regard it as improbable that he would have cared to enter on speculations as to the non-incarnate Word."[1]

[1] *Op. cit.*

(*c*) *Enhypostasia.*

Before embarking upon the few remarks that will have to be put forward in connexion with the doctrine of enhypostasia, or that there existed a *human* element in God prior to Incarnation, and which rendered such an assumption of humanity possible, it will be advisable to preface the discussion with an introductory note upon the conception of perfect human personality.

In our philosophical section we saw that those thinkers who incline to the view that a person must necessarily be one term in the antithetical relation of Ego and non-ego, and that such a contrast is of the essence of personal being, conceive of God as supra-personal, as One possessing an existence transcending any such antithesis. If personality has as its inevitable accompaniment an *external* world, that is, if personality spells limitation, such a mode of existence is *ex hypothesi* alien to the Deity. To speak of God as supra-personal is *not* to deprive Him of the highest, holiest and most spiritual experiences of man; but to affirm the besetting limitations of all such experiences. Lotze prefers to speak of God alone as possessing perfect personality, while to all others is allotted but a pale copy thereof. He urges, in defence of his doctrine, that egohood is the primary fact of personality, which can be *experienced* out of every relation of contrast between Ego and non-ego, and it is only so that it can be subsequently *thinkable* in that relation. This is precisely the same theory as that of the supra-personalists, for in the *relation* between God and us, He appears in both cases as supra-personal.

Finite, human, personality cannot be taken as sufficient data upon which to base any problem respecting the Absolute Personality of God. Being only of relative value, and having only relative existence, its presupposition, as well as supposition, must be that which possesses *absolute* value, and which has *absolute* existence. "The finite *as finite* has no true existence." Man needs God in every way, and without this ground in Him, he can have no real being, for He alone *constitutes* ultimate reality. Only *in* God is man truly man, only as he is immanent in the

Transcendent, or as he 'abides in the Vine,' has he any true life; and the statement is complementary, that only as God abides in man, only as the Transcendent is immanent in him does he become possessed of perfect personality. The rigid dichotomy of 'God and man' must always be false, as this interpenetration through mutual immanence, mutual indwelling, is virtually discarded. The Incarnation is the symbol of the complementary and not contradictory notions of the Divine and human natures; only He could live a truly human life because He was the Logos of God, and the Logos was the Ego in the Incarnate Word. "Only by transcending the human can the human be human." Hegel in his *Philosophy of Religion* touches upon this thought, for he says that "the Incarnation involves the truth that the Divine and human natures are not implicitly different. God in human form. The truth is that there is only one reason, one Spirit, that Spirit as finite has no true existence."

The majority of Christological problems have proved their insolubility, chiefly owing to the erroneous conception held as to the nature of God, or perfect personality. We must be ever on our guard against substituting the false *infinite* for the true *Absolute*. God is conceived in the very atmosphere of antithesis, which is the life-breath of διάνοια; but the higher νοῦς, alone capable of finding Him, cannot breathe in these regions. Dr Iverach remarks that "the conception of a perfect self-consciousness consists in the fact that it is in possession of itself, and can set the bounds of its own experience. Self-knowledge, self-reverence, self-control—in these, and not in finitude or infinitude, lies the conception of a perfect selfhood."

Our inability adequately to conceive of the nature of God lies at the basis of all those fruitless attempts to combine the two natures of Christ, divine and human, into one personal real life.

The same process of analytic thought has been at work, and its result has been to divide asunder the total and synthetic being of one concrete reality. Here as always to dissect is to destroy, to analyse is to kill; we are left with two abstract halves, two single aspects of a life which the process of hypostatisation will never join into a complete whole. Only as the Incarnation

is regarded synthetically, only as God and man are seen to interpenetrate in spiritual union, and only as this is postulated as fundamental and *anterior* to all analysis, shall we preserve the key to unlock the mystery of His Person. The 'natures' are not "in themselves distinctly functioning substantialities which may be logically estimated or adjusted to each other, or combined in unspiritual modes."[1] Only in a living experience, only as the focal ego binds the natures into an absolute harmony, do they form a personal life. "The spirit alone suffuses into a unity the manifold particulars with a glow and intimacy of specifically conscious life. A twofold personality again is not merely something we fail to understand; it is something we see quite well to be impossible. We do not have to pass out beyond the manhood to the Godhead. They are not so utterly heterogeneous and disparate. The Scylla of a duplex personality and the Charybdis of an impersonal manhood have invariably proved fatal to the doctrine of two natures. If it takes Jesus' manhood seriously, as the New Testament of course does by instinct, it makes shipwreck of the notion of a double Self. If, on the other hand, it insists on the unity of the person, the unavoidable result is to abridge the integrity of the manhood and present a Figure whom it is difficult to identify with the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels. For tradition the unity of the person is always a problem, and to the last a mystery; for the New Testament it is the first reality we touch. For tradition it appears as a hypothetical conclusion tentatively posited at the close of intricate processes of reasoning; for the New Testament it is given in a direct and original impression."[2]

The doctrine of Enhypostasia is one attempt to solve the problem of the Person of Christ without falling either into the 'Scylla of a duplex personality' or into the 'Charybdis of an impersonal manhood.' Its essential tenets are that the Logos, who Himself possesses all that personality contains—passing by, at this point, the precise relevancy of speaking of the *Personality* of the Logos—when He took upon Himself human nature, gave to it *human* personality, albeit *perfect* human personality. The

[1, 2] H. R. Mackintosh, *op. cit.*

archetype of human personality being in the 'Word,' in Whose express image it was originally created, He already contains within Himself all that constitutes distinctively human personality. Apollinarius had long ago stated that the possibility of the Incarnation rested upon this potential *human element* in God, humanity never having been alien to His essential Nature.

What He assumed in Incarnation was not a human individual, for this did not as yet exist; nor was it humanity as such, for this is but a miserable abstraction; but rather a potential human individual, a nature not yet developed into a person or hypostasis. "The hypostasis through which this takes place is the personal Logos through whose union with this potential man, the potential man acquires a concrete reality, an individual existence."[1] Again elsewhere we read that "In itself the human nature of Christ is ἀνυπόστασις—that which hath not a subsistence of its own, which should give it individuation and distinction from the same nature in any other person. But it hath its subsistence in the Person of the Son, which thereby is its own. The divine nature, as in that Person, is its suppositum."[2]

H. M. Relton appears to give his support to the doctrine in his work *A Study in Christology*. Bringing the theory up-to-date by the use of modern terminology, he states it in the following terms: "By the doctrine of enhypostasia, the manhood receives personality by its assumption by the Logos. It has no independent personality of its own, neither was it a mere series of attributes. It had no existence prior to the Incarnation, but became hypostatic, and received its subsistence, and consequently its completeness, when the Divine Logos became its Ego. The manhood is thus less than an independent personality and more than an accident of the Godhead. Thus the Divine Logos is the subject of both natures. The Logos already possessed all that enabled it to live a truly human life."[3]

What precisely was assumed by the Son it would seem impossible to specify. Apollinarius made the mistake of denying to Christ a human νοῦς or spirit, but what is not assumed is not

[1] Dr Fisher in *History of Christian Doctrine*.
[2] John Owen.
[3] See H. M. Relton, *A Study in Christology*.

redeemed. Although no ego, that we believe constitutes ego-hood or experience, was assumed, yet something more than a set of predicates of manhood seemed to have been necessary. Perhaps we may venture to suggest that it was rather ideal Man, or man viewed *sub specie aeternitatis*, man as he really exists in the mind of God, that formed the human element in Christ. Such an existence would be ideal always, but real only in the Son; ideal because an eternal and perfect object of an eternal and perfect Mind; real because assumed by a real Incarnation of a real Being, although possessing its own reality prior to Incarnation. Hegel, in his own peculiar phraseology, touches upon this thought of a human moment in the Godhead, but he speaks of it as only a vanishing moment. "The human, finite, negative, is not outside God, but a moment in God Himself. The highest knowledge of the nature of Spirit is contained in this thought."[1] "Finitude is a vanishing moment; still He has in this moment revealed and shown Himself to the world."[2]

The whole doctrine of Enhypostasia may be of value as indicating the direction in which a solution of the Person of Christ is finally to be sought, but it is beset with difficulties. It is not at all clear, even if we admit that "His consciousness would be *at every stage* both divine and human, if every act was both human and divine, not *some* human, some divine," it is not clear how His Divinity formed the eternal and immutable background of His humanity. As regards His Divinity there was no change absolutely, there was no *progressive* Incarnation; but His humanity must and did change by a progressive and developing growth. This is not to deny a perfection at each stage, but it is to deny identity of beginning and end in time.

Again, we are told that in Christ the particular embraces its own universal. The Divine is not exhausted by embracing the human, yet is wholly revealed through it. The *form* was human, the content divine; it was unlimited, yet again self-limited. But how can the particular so embrace its own universal? If the moment of particularity is due to the moment of humanity in God, this does not exhaust God, for He infinitely transcends

[1, 2] Hegel, *Philosophy of Religion*. Eng. trans.

such a moment. He is all that it is, but it is not all that He is; nor can *perfect* humanity be *equated* with Divinity. We are once again in the region of the understanding, in the region of abstractions, which are the playthings of *διανοια*.

Lastly, we hear that two natures are His media of knowledge, and both are within the Incarnation. The one beyond finite comprehension, yet not beyond perfect *human* comprehension. Can we agree that divinity lies *wholly* within human comprehension, even when the comprehension is that of *perfect* humanity? Surely this is to make divinity and humanity identical in being, or ontologically identical, for like can only be known by like. God transcends humanity, being *wholly* within it, yet also *wholly* without. A mysticism that loses the valuable significance conveyed by 'panentheism' in an abstract unity wherein no differentiation is to be found, has assuredly failed to reach the highest of all unities that can alone fitly be called *Absolute*.

(*d*) *Universal Incarnation.*

In the philosophical section of this essay we had occasion to examine this theory of the Incarnation in outline; but here we propose to treat it, as far as possible, in its bearings upon *Christology*. Since the Hegelian Christology appeared, or rather the peculiar light shed upon the doctrine of the Person of Christ by Hegel's interpretation of Him in terms of dialectical metaphysics, there have arisen many thinkers, of no mean order, who share his fundamental opinions, and are, in consequence, led to a similarity in their conclusions. In Germany we may note especially Strauss and Biedermann, and in England, T. H. Green, the Cairds, and at one time R. J. Campbell. In view of the prevalence of opinion on Christological problems in favour of some approach to a solution along the lines first enunciated by the famous German idealist, it is hardly possible to neglect altogether some statement of their views.

At the outset let us call to mind the excellent summary of Réville, wherein he cautions us against erroneous conceptions of God. "The Trinitarian God is a living God, He is not the

unknown principle seated at the centre of all things, blind and deaf, producing worlds like a fermenting substance without knowing either what He is or what He does. Nor, again, is He the purely ideal term of the 'Universal Becoming,' THAT God in process of continual evolution who does not create the world, but is created by the world; a *future* God who will be, but at present is not, or who at least only murmurs as yet in the cradle of the human consciousness. Finally, He is not the dreary God of Deism, that supreme mechanician retired within the icy depths of His own eternity, and without permanent or active connection with the works of His capricious genius. None of these Gods is a being we can worship. To present them to the human spirit hungering after religion, is like giving stones to the poor instead of bread."

According to Hegelian Christology man is as essential to God as He is to man. It will not be an unfair interpretation of his theory of the Godhead to say that the world as such is the sphere of His particularity. While He remains in Himself alone, that is, in the ideal kingdom of the Father, wherein there seems to be an ideal Trinity also, He has not 'let Himself go' in real earnest. Nature forms the antithesis of the supreme triad with the Idea as thesis, and Absolute Spirit as synthesis; it is, therefore, the moment that corresponds with the kingdom of the *Son*, the kingdom of *particularity*.

"Without the world God would not be God." This is surely to make finite creation an integral factor in the life of God, and as such an essential constituent of His Nature.

The history of the world is God's Self-realisation in and through the process of finite experience; reality is the evolution of the Absolute Idea mediated by nature and history. "God is the absolute principle generating the history of the entire Universe."[1] He became personal in man only, the subjective spirit. Spirit, having come to full self-consciousness, is the completely developed Idea in the Person of Christ. This is the union of man with God "in the sensuous form appropriate to history."[2] Hereafter humanity realised that in it dwelt the divine

[1] See H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ*.
[2] See *E.R.E.* vol. VII.

spirit. According to Hegel, the whole history of the Life of Christ is the pictorial and imaginative mode of representation of the metaphysical truth that God and man are not implicitly different. While the former, or *religious* embodiment of this truth, is essential for mankind to learn the deeper ontological unity that subsists between God and man, yet it must not be exalted into a *fundamental* and ultimate standpoint beyond which we cannot go, as Christian doctrine appears so to have exalted it.

God must enter the empirical order of space and time 'in an objective manner,' in order to bring man to the recognition of the vital oneness of the relation that obtains between them; but this visible, transient, and sensuous manifestation, must be subordinated to the higher reality of the implicit unity of humanity and the world, as a totality, with the God who has yet to become the Absolute Spirit. Faith in the Person of Christ is the prelude, perhaps the necessary prelude, to this philosophical dogma of the fundamental unity, and not its consequence; it is the stepping-stone upon which we must rise to higher things; but weak eyes may mistake as the end what is really but the means. In such a system it is difficult to find the connecting link that binds dogma to history, the eternal truths to empirical events, the philosophical theory to the life of Christ, the Absolute with its temporary manifestations, the ideal relations with the real examples of those relations. "Christianity receives absolute rank, but at the cost of its tie with history. For only the world-process as a whole, and no single point or person in it, can be the true manifestation of the Absolute. Hence, to quote Hegel's unequivocal language, 'Christology affirms simply that God comes to be Spirit (*Geist wird*), and this can take place only in finite spirit, in man; in whom there arises the consciousness of the Absolute, and who then is likewise the Absolute's consciousness of itself.'"[1] This reminds us of Spinoza's dictum that the love of man for God is really the love by which God loves Himself in man; but he did not place the progressive nature of man's love within the Being of God, and

[1] H. R. Mackintosh, *op. cit.*

regard it as an integral moment in His Self-realisation, as Hegel appears to have done. Upon the background of such an idealistic philosophy, the Incarnation is not the expression, under mundane conditions, by the means of sign, symbol, and type, of the things laid up in the heavens—following such a view as we have presented to us in the Fourth Gospel of the Jesus of history—but a figurative drama, illustrating a set of timeless metaphysical ideas, or perhaps the Absolute Idea, chiefly with a view to didactic purposes.

What has been predicated by the Christian community as true of Jesus, is only true of the Divine-human society *as a whole*. While the former reasoning results in self-contradiction, the latter is the noblest expression of the ontological unity between Divine and human, God and man. In the famous words of Strauss, "the Idea loves not to pour all its fulness into one example, in jealousy towards all the rest. Only the race answers to the Idea." If it is true that in Christ we see humanity, this is only the empirical and sensuous mode of presentation of the deeper and more profound truth that in humanity we see Christ. Christ is the truth of humanity that humanity may be the truth of Christ; the real is the antithesis when transfigured by Absolute Spirit in the ultimate triad; Christ becomes but a transient moment in a transient evolutionary process.

Biedermann, who was greatly influenced by Hegel, draws the important, but perhaps false, distinction between the Christ-principle and the Christ-Person. Maintaining that "God and man are distinct in nature, but they are one in existence," he proceeds: "to speculative thought, accordingly, the incarnation is no single event, capable of being assigned to a specific time; it is an eternal fact, an unbeginning and unending factor in the life of God. In short, the Christ-principle, as it may be called, is but the religious expression of the fact that Infinite and finite Spirit, although distinct in essence, exist in a vital metaphysical reciprocity. With this alone dogmatic is concerned. On the other hand, dogmatic proper has nothing to do with the Christ-Person; the historic Jesus, as the Founder of the Christian

religion, belongs to the sphere of history; He is subject, not object, of the Christian faith."[1]

The Christ-principle was the underlying eternal truth, which had its ground in the very life of the Godhead; the Christ-Person was the symbolic representation of this principle to man in empirical form in history. According to Christian doctrine, however, the Person is at once the manifestation because the beginning and end of the principle. In Christ, the Revealer, the Revelation, and the Revealed, are synthesised: He can so reveal the eternal truth of the nature of God because He is what He reveals; the principle is not above Him, but subordinate to Him; only in the *individual*, as Hegel himself says, can the universal and the particular be synthesised. It was natural for Hegel to dwell rather upon the faith of the Person than faith to the Person; for him the faith authenticated the fact rather than the fact creating and justifying the faith. But "the remarkable thing is the relation of the faith to the Person rather than the Person to the faith. Christ through death became the God-man in the faith of the Church, and His history was written by those who held this faith and upon whom the Spirit had been poured out. The main thing was the consciousness not of the historical Christ, but of those who held Him to be the God-man."[2]

The inevitable tendency of Hegelian Christology was to regard Christ as but the supreme example of the measure of the stature of the fulness of man. We are all destined to become on an equality with Him through the gradual process of the self-realisation of the Absolute in cosmic history, the real philosophical interpretation of the scientific process of evolution. At the present day emphasis is laid upon the divine immanence in the world; the "'New Theology' appeals to natural science as teaching the unity of all things in the doctrine of evolution, and to idealism as teaching the indwelling of God in the entire process of time. The doctrine has therefore been drawn that in all men the divine is inherent in some measure, while in Christ manhood has been filled with the divine to its utmost capacity."[3]

[1] See H. R. Mackintosh, *op. cit.* p. 263.
[2] A. M. Fairbairn, *Christ in Modern Theology*, p. 221.
[3] *E.R.E.* vol. VII.

From their respective standpoints, Green, the Cairds, Campbell and Professor Upton, all seem to favour a theory of monistic immanence such as may be found adumbrated in the philosophy of Hegel. We hear of the eternal self-consciousness as gradually developing Himself through organisms, which process can never be completed in time, as it is effected through a series of sensuous acts, it being contrary to the nature of an infinite series to have an end in time, that is, through the addition of any number of finite increments. God goes out of Himself in Incarnation and returns to Himself in Eternal Spirit in Incarnation. "There is an identity of self with self. God is the realisation of the determinate possibilities of every man."

R. J. Campbell speaks to the same effect in *The New Theology*: "All human history represents the incarnation or manifesting of the eternal Son, or Christ, of God. The incarnation cannot be limited to one life only, however great that life may be. It is quite false to think of Jesus and no one else as the Son of God incarnate." "Our being is the same as God's, though our consciousness of it is limited." "There is no real distinction between God and man, humanity and deity." In his Hibbert Lectures Professor Upton can say that "God is the substance of every human soul, and it was not Jesus only Who was of the same substance with the Father, the same is true of the innumerable persons that proceed from, but still remain in living union with the Indwelling Eternal."

Such theories have surely mistaken the true mysticism of the spiritual consciousness, which leads us eventually to the One, the Absolute, the realm in which God is all in all, for the false mysticism, which finds expression in so many absolutist philosophies, although they are not philosophies of the Absolute. As we have observed in our brief treatment of mysticism, there are many pitfalls in the ascent of the soul to God along the *mystical* path; it has only too often happened that we grasp at zero instead of at the supreme object of the mystic quest, we mistake the shadow for the substance.

In our present connexion, those theories are mistaken that would reach God, the Absolute, through a pure immanentist

philosophy alone, without any recognition of the *transcendence* of Deity to humanity. To sunder 'man's very element from man' and declare that 'all is God's' is either debasing to God or debasing to man. We move here upon a lower level than the *spiritual*, not being able to reconcile without annulling the essential distinction between Him and us; we move in the plane of 'Soul,' in the Plotinian sense of that term, upon which all strictly *metaphysical* categories are formed. All is spiritual, we agree; all forms an organic whole, we agree; but to speak of the world as a moment in the self-realisation of the Absolute, which is virtually to deny that it is an expression of transcendent will, as neither actuated by constraint nor caprice, is to fall short of the true relation of God to creation. "The truth of the immanent conception is conditioned on its consummation in the transcendent," says Martineau; without the complementary conception of transcendence, we must logically reach that false Absolutism in the night where all cows are black. This is not the goal and crown of the creative process, nor is it the alpha and omega of the world's evolution; on the contrary, it is merely a travesty and caricature of the nature of the spiritual world, the true home of the eternal and immutable verities, the dwelling-place of the Absolute God, Who is all in all.

The Logos-doctrine revealed that God has always been immanent in nature and man. The world's history is the growing manifestation of the Logos which is present in the evolutionary process, not as a 'World-Soul,' but as the Inspirer, Revealer, Illuminator and Sustainer of the process, continually bringing God, the Transcendent Reality, within the immanent evolution, until the fulness of the time arrives when this immanence ushers in the Incarnation. No longer is God present in promise and prophecy, no longer in sign and symbol, but present in Person, in reality, in fact, as the fulness of the Divine Light, Life, Thought, Reason and Love. "All tended to mankind," and mankind tended to Incarnation. "But the idea of Humanity cannot appear in the race, nor be realised by it as a race, till it first appears in and is realised by *the individual*. The ethical fulness of life is first in the One man that it may be, through

Him, in all. This is an analogy with all God's ways of working as far as known to us."[1] "But it *is* in human form that He appears, and there can be, therefore, nothing in His appearance inconsistent with the Divine thought of *man*, which is that of the son and image of God. A Divine Being is in our midst; but it is in the form of a man that He is here."[2]

Baron von Hügel gives expression to precisely the same thought, indicating that a *general* incarnation is but an abstraction, man in general being only an idea. Hegel also maintained the abstract character of a universal incarnation, emphasising the necessity of the moment of particularity as integral to the whole downward movement of the divine, yet he arrived at the higher truth, as it appeared to him, of the *symbolic* significance of the Person of Christ. The statement of von Hügel is as follows: "No doctrine of the Divinity of Christ, no affirmation, even of just simply the normality of the mind of Jesus, are other than out of touch with all the real possibilities of the question, if they do not first recognise that a real Incarnation of God in man can only mean Incarnation in some particular human nature. Man in general is only an idea, it is not a fact, a reality; and God, the supremely factual, utterly real, the creator of the essential facts in man, did not, in the Incarnation, reverse either His own, God's nature, or the reflex of it, the nature of man. The Incarnation could not, even by Himself, be made other than the entering into, and possession of, a human mind and will endowed with special racial dispositions and particular social categories of thought."[3] Christian faith is really the foundation fact upon which we so often build our theories of God's relation to the world.

The thought continually recurs that the emphasis with which we find certain writers insisting upon the Incarnation of God in a *particular* Person, as a necessary prelude to what can be vaguely termed *universal* incarnation, is founded upon their faith in Christ as the Incarnate Son of God revealed *à posteriori*. What we should desire is a system at once coherent, consistent, and

[1, 2] W. L. Walker, *The Spirit and the Incarnation.*
[3] *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion.*

comprehensive, founded not upon an *à posteriori* but upon an *à priori* basis of pure reason. We would desire them to show us how, from the fundamental nature of God only, or Absolute Spirit, a *particular* Incarnation was alone possible, and essentially involved in creation. It is with difficulty that we rid ourselves of the suspicion that their doctrines have but an *actual*, not an *apodeictical* ground; all things in the world of spiritual reason, of *νοῦς*, however, possess both the *à posteriori* and the *à priori* element, they are because they must be, and must be because they are. A system, a doctrine, must not merely justify the ways of God to man, it must demonstrate the *necessity* of those ways from the fundamental ground of the Absolute, from the ultimate Nature of God. In the instance before us of the particular Incarnation in a single individual, we know empirically, chiefly from spiritual experience, that this was God's supreme way of making His final, complete, and absolute revelation to the world; but no theological or philosophical system has yet fully illustrated, or made it clear, why an Incarnation of the Transcendent Deity was a necessary consequence of His Being as such. This and this alone will suffice as a complete interpretation of the Revealer and the Revelation. In Christ was the ideal of all Sonship realised; through such a realisation we are all enabled to attain, each in his own measure, to the fulness of the stature of Christ; but we are not told how and why we need this mediation through the Divine-human Person of Jesus Christ. Again, we know that immanence can never be identified with Incarnation, because the latter conception comprehends the complementary one of transcendence; yet these theories of the particular Incarnation of Christ leave us unsatisfied, for they never demonstrate the whole truth implied in the Person of Christ; they seldom establish a sufficiently fundamental basis in the nature of God, which must necessarily be the point of departure in all Christological problems.

F. Platt says that "human nature as seen in the Divine-human Person of our Lord is not simply the ascent of God immanent in humanity, but the descent of the ethically transcendent God to become incarnate in human nature. 'The perfect moral

immanence of God in Christ is not only *unique*; it is typical, and constitutes an ideal for the race.' We are 'foreordained to be conformed to the image of God's Son that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.' His unique Sonship is the source of our sonship to His Father. He is therefore the Saviour and Redeemer."[1] Having stated that Incarnation is more than the climax of Divine immanence in humanity, Christ being more than an example of God's perfect moral immanence, he says that He is typical, "and constitutes an ideal for the race." But how and why does He possess this universality, this inclusive relationship with all men? In virtue of the fact of His essential Godhead, no doubt, we shall be told; but once again we may legitimately put the question: How and why? It seems that a whole nest of assumptions is implicit in each of these statements. What is the real relation between God and man, and what the fundamental significance of any Incarnation at all? "His unique Sonship is the source of our sonship to His Father," but how is it so, in what respects, in what manner, does Christ include all other men, being representative Man and Ideal Man?

W. L. Walker speaks in a somewhat similar strain; but even here the necessary clarity of thought, of reason, of logical consequences following logical premisses, seems to be wanting. "Because sonship is *ethical* the Sonship of Christ in no sense overshadows ours, but is the revelation of its Ideal for every man, and shows us how it is possible for God to have any number of sons sharing in the real substance of the Father after the image of Christ and through the indwelling of His Spirit, in relation to whom Christ shall be 'the firstborn among many brethren,' as the one wholly perfect and unique Son of God in whom God was incarnate in human form."[2] Again, "The Incarnation of God in Him does not in any sense narrow a real universal Incarnation; but in Him the true sonship of man to God is realised, its eternal ground in God Himself is revealed, and the Incarnation of God in man manifested in its true ethical character, while in Him, at the same time, is provided the chief

[1] *Immanence and Christian Thought.*
[2] *The Spirit and the Incarnation.*

means by which such Incarnation can become, in some real measure, actual in all men."[1]

We believe that Christ's 'Ethical Sonship' in no way overshadows ours, that *particular* Incarnation in no way narrows universal Incarnation, but we are left to conjecture why and how this mediation of God, through the Incarnate Logos, is an absolutely indispensable preliminary to the partial incarnation, through the Eternal Spirit mediated by Christ, in all men. To assert that in Him we behold the ideal Man, to assert that His Sonship reveals our sonship, all this is implicit in Christian Faith and Christian love; but we search in vain for the clue to the real transition from His Incarnation to our incarnation, from the manifestation of God in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth to His manifestation through universal incarnation, which, we are told, contains an important truth, in all men. If the emphasis upon His *ethical* Sonship is intended to *exclude* any confining of Incarnation to a particular Person, we may reply that, being ignorant of the laws governing the spiritual world, especially the precise relation of spirit with spirit and of The Spirit with spirits, we still are unable to see how such mediation through the historic life of Jesus, as we know *empirically*, was a necessity for the diffusion of the Spirit in all, or MUST be such a necessary prelude to so universal an operation of God. The *fact* we all know, the *necessity* for the fact we still desire to know. We still await, therefore, a Christological dogmatic, wherein every proposition has an *à priori* foundation because based upon the essential nature of God as Absolute Spirit.

(*e*) "*The Value of God.*"

In our zeal for the reality of the atoning, redeeming, and saving act accomplished by the historical life on earth of Jesus Christ, as Incarnate Son of the Most High God, all theories of His Person that would divorce the moral and spiritual *values* of His manhood from the metaphysical and philosophical theories of His essential Godhead can lead to nothing but dissatisfaction. "When the soul enters the 'Holy of Holies' the intellect is not

[1] W. L. Walker, *op. cit.*

kept waiting at the door." There is no fundamental discrepancy between the heart and the head; for to despise reason and the works of reason, even in the very highest realms of revelation, is to despise the Source and Giver of reason. "He that would transcend reason falls outside it"; the higher spiritual reason, the *νοῦς*, has its all-important part to play even in the vision of the 'spirit in love,' by which the '*Absolute*' alone can be apprehended, and for which alone it is reserved. Reason comes into its own only by repeated attempts to set forth a consistent and coherent system of doctrine through the intellectual processes of analysis and synthesis, having as its ground the essential fact of spiritual experience itself, in which there is present, in an implicit form, the *thought* factor, as an integral constituent of that experience. It is the function and noble office of reason to interpret and relate into one united whole all experience, whether it is specifically religious or not; for reason is the 'concrete universal,' it is the moment of *unity*, for which all ultimate dualisms are intolerable. We feel unable to admit, with one of the disciples of Ritschl, that the unique and unapproachable relation inherent in all communion of the spirit with Christ is incapable of being rendered explicit and definite to consciousness. Only because the interpretation is found to involve such terms as the Absolute and the Logos is it legitimate to employ them; but the inadequacy of reason's attempts to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the Deity of Christ in relation to His humanity does not spell the illegitimacy of the search for such a solution. The whole of Christology is the work of the intellect upon the data and implications of spiritual experience; the whole of Theology is no less the product of intellectual activities; without the reason's operation the Godhead would be in a sense hidden. It would have remained quiescent and inarticulate, never having emerged from its state of passivity. All dogma, all doctrine, is the fruit of reason, without which the Christian revelation would have been incomplete, unrelated, incoherent, and unintelligible. Christology must be a theology, "a partial and conditioned revelation only admits a partial and conditioned faith. We desire 'God's Presence and His very Self.' A vaster revelation

would be possible if this unconditioned revelation is denied, and a vaster Love. Christian religion is then not absolute."[1] The obscurity into which the various constructions of the Incarnation, from a speculative standpoint, have fallen is inevitable to a certain degree, for is our Christology likely to be more intelligible than our Theology? Have we ever solved the mystery of Jesus Christ until we have solved the mystery of God? According to Ritschl and his school, all metaphysical interpretations of the Person of Christ, and His relation to God outside the sphere of Incarnation, are discountenanced. The intellect he would as completely banish from theology as Bergson would banish it altogether. For both, the real suffers distortion by being forced into the mould of any intellectual system. For the former, spiritual experience of the value of Christ's atoning and redeeming work on earth is fundamental, and no intrusion of reason can help us to arrive at a deeper construction of the significance of this work in relation to God; it merely obscures the vision rendered possible by the operation of the Spirit. For the latter, reason acts statically, it takes snapshots of the real, which is ever eluding its grasp, being constituted of finer and subtler material. The pure mobility of the '*élan vital*' that 'rolls through all things' cannot be crystallised by the processes of intellect. The real is more than the rational. Life is more than logic.

Ritschl considers that all problems relating to the pre-existence of Christ are illegitimate and unnecessary, it being sufficient to assert that He has for us the '*value of God*.' "The eternal Godhead of the Son is perfectly intelligible only as the object of the Divine mind and will, that is, only for God Himself. But if at the same time we discount, in the case of God, the interval between purpose and accomplishment, then we get the formula that Christ exists for God eternally as that which He appears to us under the limitations of time. But only for God, since for us, as pre-existent, Christ is hidden." No details of the pre-existent life of Christ have been revealed to us, and no profundity of speculation can penetrate to those transcendent

[1] H. R. Mackintosh, *op. cit.*

spheres without losing all touch with reality as at present known to us.

We know that He pre-existed in a sense that cannot be attributed to any other being, for through His agency and mediation were the worlds created. Perhaps the least inadequate mode in which we may conceive His life 'in the form of God,' is neither as a divine impersonal principle, nor as a predicate, or series of predicates, of the Deity, nor again as '*a* Person' of the Godhead, thereby falling into tritheism; but as One who possessed all that the term '*personal*' connotes eminenter.

Whether those thinkers are right who would define His pre-existence as a *Grenzbegriff*: "a conception, that is, indicative of reality lying just across the border-line of our knowledge," yet looming on us indefinably, as it were, out of penumbral mists. Whether it were better, with Kirn, to speak of the "*supra-historical* character of the revelation given in Christ than of the *pre-existence* of Christ with the Father." Whether, finally, we should agree with Professor Mackintosh, "enough that the manifestation of love was a manifestation of *Divine* love, sublime and overwhelming; enough that the sacrifice undergone prior to Christ's advent took place within God's very being, and that out of the Divine life-fulness, at Love's behest, He came forth Whom in the fields of time we know as Jesus." "Hence it (faith) must see the pre-incarnate One IN God, not alongside of God, not as an entity to be known and appreciated in abstraction from God." "'Not from any wanton intrusion into mysteries but under the necessity of breaking silence,' we designate Him an eternal personal mode or distinction within the one self-conscious Life of God."[1] Whether this last more reserved and guarded statement is the truer, as recognising our limited data as well as our limited capacity for such a task, is a matter that will make its appeal differently to differently constituted minds. It is enough to note that all theories regard the *fact* of Christ's *real*, and not merely ideal, pre-existence, as important, nay, as vital to Christian faith. Ritschl appears to think that the whole problem is external to the revelation in

[1] See H. R. Mackintosh, *op. cit.*

Jesus and of completely subordinate significance. Kaftan, one of his disciples, answers 'Yes' and 'No' to the pre-existence hypothesis. This means the introduction of a speculative element which disturbs the concrete object of Christian faith. The predominant thought in some of Ritschl's experiences of Christ seems to be merely one of the *immanence* of God in Him, for he objects to all dogmas that would place Him in isolation from believers. "We have no concern with the pre-existent One, who exists for God only; our faith is asked for the historic life that began at Bethlehem." This position is, as we have before observed, a virtual surrender of the whole doctrine of Incarnation. Unless in Incarnation, as distinguished from immanence, we have an *Absolute* revelation of God, which of course admits of no degrees, then the Christian religion may be superseded by a higher manifestation of God, Christ not being, after all, the Supreme Logos of the Father. But there are many passages where he adopts the genuinely Christian attitude, predicating of Jesus essential Godhead. Always subordinating the postulation of His Deity to the moral and spiritual values resulting from His life, he says that the doctrine of His actual Godhead must be translated into the eternal purpose of God concerning man, which was ever bound up with the Son, "as object of the Divine Mind and Will," and "sharer of the attribute of God as end of creation." "The right appreciation of the completeness of the revelation of God through Christ is assured by the predicate of His Godhead."[1] Herrmann to the same effect thinks that "we must get past the old dogma of the Deity of Christ to a higher conception of Christ." Somewhat in opposition to such a view, we would suggest that the whole of spiritual experience implies and is the result of the Deity of Christ. Behind and underlying all moral and spiritual value-judgments upon the merits and intrinsic virtues arising out of the life of Christ lies this predication of Deity to Him. They are true because it is true; they are necessary and essential because it is primary and fundamental. "Not merely ought Dogmatic to include a Christology as one of its integral constituents, but the task of Christology is prescribed *ab initio* by the specifically

[1] See *E.R.E.* vol. VII.

Christian experience. Silence on the matter is an avowal that we feel no need of Christ as mediating our personal possession of God. Kaftan puts the truth not a whit too strongly when he asserts that Christology is either the doctrine of Christ's Godhead, or it is nothing at all."[1]

It is only a radically false philosophy that maintains a rigid and ultimate separation of value-judgments from existential-judgments; the valuable alone is real, and only the real is valuable; metaphysics knows no gulf which divides it from the allied subjects of ethics, aesthetics and dialectics. God, the Absolute, the utterly *real*, is at once the heart and home, the Alpha and Omega, of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True. Christ, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all, combines, in an indissoluble spiritual union, the whole of being and the whole triad of values; in Him the 'is' and the 'ought to be' meet face to face, and the encounter is one of mutual recognition. Being and valuation, reality and ideality, are synthesised in the Incarnate; each has profited by the ineffable union, each has beheld the face of its genesis in the other, and nevermore can they be sundered without tears.

"He (Christ) was *not* a state, attribute, or function of God, but a Subject of experience. He is the Only-Begotten of God who came down from heaven and *became* 'flesh.' Incarnation means the assumption of humanity by such a subject who before existed as unincarnate; short of such implication, the term were better replaced by some other, such as inspiration, immanence, or possession. The issue is not solved but merely shelved, if the metaphysical question in Christology is waived, as by the Ritschlians, and Christ is deified only as having 'the value of God'; it can still be asked—and I believe must be answered—whether He is to be regarded as ontologically God, or as a superhuman being between the divine and human, or merely as unique man. Christianity has maintained that He was very God of very God."[2] Only if Christ is the Absolute Revelation,

[1] H. R. Mackintosh, *op. cit.*

[2] F. R. Tennant, "Present Condition of the Doctrines of the Incarnation and the Trinity," *Constructive Quarterly*, 1920.

because the Revealer of God, may we say that "the Incarnation opened Heaven, for it was the revelation of the Word; but it also reconsecrated earth, for 'the Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us.'"[1] Only if He is "very God of very God" have the poet's words any intelligible meaning:

> For Supreme Spirit subject was to clay,
> And Law from its own servants learned a law,
> And Light besought a Lamp unto its way,
> And Awe was reigned by awe,
> At one small house of Nazareth;
> And Golgotha
> Saw Breath to breathlessness resign its breath,
> And Life do homage for its crown of death.[2]

[1] J. R. Illingworth. [2] Francis Thompson.

CHAPTER VI

"INCARNATION *and* REVELATION"

WE shall not be fully prepared to enter upon the central theme of our subject, the relation between Immanence and Incarnation, before we have examined more completely the whole significance of the revelation accomplished through the Incarnation of the Only-Begotten Son of God. Up to the present some of the historical attitudes towards the Person of Christ have alone engaged our attention, especially those that have the most direct bearing upon the relationship between Immanence and Incarnation. In the present chapter we propose to discuss rather the modern approaches to an interpretation of Incarnation, drawing comparisons, contrasts, and parallels with traditional views, where this seems to elucidate the obscurity attaching to any modern presentation, or any modern and unfamiliar theory due, in part, to ambiguity of modern terminology.

The extent of the literature upon the subject of Theology in all its forms that has made its appearance during the last twenty years would not only fill volumes, but libraries. Its comprehensive nature, allying itself on the one hand with science and philosophy, on the other with comparative religion, psychology and mysticism, both of East and West, forbids the most ardent student from entering, except superficially, into but a fraction of the problems involved in the whole range of its enquiry, so vast are its dimensions and so extensive its territory. If, under these circumstances, the treatment here accorded to a great subject seems to be but scant and inadequate, we must plead that the reason why such a subject has been approached at all is to prepare us for the necessary appreciation of the difficulties involved in our central problem, the relation between Immanence and Incarnation. In consequence, an *exhaustive* treatment of the revelation vouchsafed to man and of man in the Incarnation would be entirely out of place in the present connexion, besides being sufficient, in itself, to fill several volumes. As upon former occasions, as far as possible we hope to confine our discussion within the limits prescribed by the subject in hand, treating the

other problems, although equally essential and important, as beyond our present purview. Such a limitation of territory, resulting from such a limited enquiry, may, nay must, leave a multitude of difficulties untouched, but we trust that the impression will not arise that these have been shelved, or that such a procedure is indicative of looseness of thought, narrowness of outlook, or lack of appreciation of those problems. Enough if even a single problem in Christology can be subjected to anything approaching a thorough investigation in all its departments; enough if we are directed along the right way to a not wholly inadequate estimation of the profound difficulties and complexities arising out of such a single problem; for so interrelated and interpenetrated are all ultimate questions, that the key to one may be the key to the others, the solution of one, the solution of all.

The Incarnation was a revelation of God to man, it was also a revelation of Man to man. Humanity was revealed as having a no lesser climax than to be consummated in Deity, for Christ became as we were that we might become as He is. Incarnation was the proof that Deity was in humanity and that humanity was in Deity. God united Himself to Humanity by Incarnation in order that in and through that act Humanity should be united to Him by Atonement and Reconciliation. Christ for ever set the seal upon the implicit affinity that had always existed between God and man; never had they been inherently different, since man is the head of creation, and Christ the Head of Man. Man attains his end, his beatitude, his ideal, only in Christ, He being the true hypostasis of Man; and God, we must suppose, can only manifest His true and eternal nature, by the act of creation and Incarnation, its crown and fulfilment. Christianity can be and is the Absolute religion only because therein we have the solution to the problem that solves the problem of religion; the complete solution of the action and revelation of God is not possible on any level lower than that of the unique Incarnation. "It is not human virtue exalted to its highest power which we need to see, but the effectual action and revelation of God. When the full significance of sin as an offence against God is

realised, the fact is appreciated that only God Himself can speak the effectual word of forgiveness." Allegorical interpretation of spiritual experiences will not alter the essential facts of that real relationship once for all made possible through Incarnation and Passion of the Incarnate Son of God. The characteristic qualities of all transcendent acts of God have a permanence, abidingness, and eternity about them, stamping them as of genuinely divine origin and of intrinsic worth, not to be annulled by the ravages of time and the vicissitudes of all things born. "The Atonement and Incarnation are *living* facts still in operation. They are part of the eternal counsels of God: and whether they are enacted in the abyss of the Divine Nature, or once for all in their fulness on the stage of history, or in miniature, as it were, in your soul or mine, the process is the same."[1] Since, then, in Christ we see both perfect God and perfect Man, God as He has been from all eternity, and man as he will be in accordance with the ultimate fulfilment of God's purpose in creation, our subject naturally divides itself into two parts: the revelation of God, and the revelation of man.

(*a*) *The Revelation of God.*

This will not be the first occasion upon which we have insisted that to predicate *Godhead* of Christ is no arbitrary or random expedient, but is implicit in Christian experience and alone is capable of interpreting the absolute nature of that experience. The doctrine of the Trinity and deity of Christ is based neither upon the outcome of philosophical reflexion upon necessary implications or preconditions of theistic belief in general, nor upon the relation of God to the world: but because it is the explication of what is implicit in Christian experience of God and Christ. All our efforts to bring into the light of common day the immense problems involved in the fundamental Christological dogma of the Deity of Christ and the relation that obtains between this and His Humanity, have attained but little.[2] "The idea of the God-man, of the single

[1] W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism.*

[2] See F. R. Tennant, "Present Condition of the Doctrines of the Incarnation and the Trinity," *Constructive Quarterly*, 1920.

Person at once human and ontologically divine, for all the expenditure of intellectual and moral effort bestowed upon its elucidation, can scarcely be said to be more intelligible to-day than when the problem of the Person of Christ was first encountered by the Church; and the conception of the Godhead as in some real sense three in one, is as great a mystery now as it was when first it began to take shape in the mind of the Christian community."[1]

We must all acknowledge the ultimate mystery that lies hidden within the very Being of God, and the nature of the personality that tabernacled amongst us, at once divine and human, in the Person of Christ. These silent mysteries will for ever ferment in the minds of men, they will ever constitute *the* problems of the universe which it is the noble and exalted task of the intellect to attempt to solve; they will ever be incomprehensible to the mighty, but the joy of the meek; a stumbling-block to the wise, but the treasure of babes; enigmatical to reason, but the life of faith.

On all hands we are being brought to the confession that it is spiritual experience alone that enables, yea, necessitates us to predicate Godhead of Jesus Christ. By those that lack such an experience it is inevitable that before long the question will be put in its simplest possible terms, and no subterfuge will be allowed to mask or conceal the real issue: "This Christ of whom you speak, is He, or is He not, one with the Ultimate Reality whom we name God? If Christianity is a religion, not a contribution to moral philosophy, where do we place Him in the sphere of things, on God's side, or merely on ours?"[2] Those only who have felt the inexplicable, mysterious, and absolute power of His Presence within them, those only who have experienced the living, abiding, and blessed communion of their inmost being with the Eternal, can respond to such questions with an assured conviction "Worship God through Christ, and Christ only as God."

May we not say that only a sound Christology can be the basis

[1] F. R. Tennant, *op. cit.*
[2] H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ.*

of a sound Soteriology, a sound Anthropology, and even a sound Theology? "We desire to communicate with God and none other." "We demand an Eternal Saviour or else we have still to reckon with the Omnipotent and All-Holy God in the matter of our sins. Again, there can be no assurance of finality in His work. Unless it is *God* within us that regenerates, redeems and sanctifies, we have no perfect consummation and bliss in communion with GOD, the All-Loving."[1] The 'unio mystica' with God is only possible if the 'unio personalis' of Him with God is already an accomplished fact; unless Christ is inclusively man, or has the universality belonging to God alone, we cannot cherish the noble and sublime hope of our poet:

> ...That He will grow incorporate with all,
> With me as Pamphylax, with him as John,
> Groom for each bride! Can a mere man do this?
> Yet Christ saith, this He lived and died to do.
> Call Christ, then, the illimitable God.[2]

We are gradually becoming conscious of the intimacy of the relation that exists between our philosophy and theology. The advance of the latter into ever-new and unexplored domains is leading us to recognise the important truth of the mutual affinities and mutual interests of each approach to reality; this should bind reason and revelation into ever-closer harmony. The problems of the relation between 'the Absolute' and the world, reality and appearance, substance and shadow, have, from the dawn of thought, been the eternal questions around which the mind of man has perpetually revolved. Pantheism, deism, absolutism, in all its myriad forms, idealism, realism, materialism, are but so many solutions to *the* greatest of all philosophical problems, while agnosticism disallows, scepticism despairs of any solution. But if these are the fundamental problems for philosophy, religion also has its own unsolved mysteries. In contrast to philosophy, for which the ultimate nature of reality is yet to seek, religion presupposes such a knowledge at the outset as one of its essential data. The parallel

[1] H. M. Relton, *A Study in Christology*.
[2] R. Browning, *A Death in the Desert*.

problems in religion to those in philosophy, enumerated above, are the relation between God and creation, God and man, and God and Christ. The philosophical problem of the universal and particular is precisely the religious problem of the two natures in Christ; and as philosophy has yet to find a solution of the former, religion has the same task respecting the latter. "How is God inwardly and actively related to anything that is *not* God? This is the battle-ground of pantheism and theism. How is His mind related to other minds? This is the battle-ground of idealism and its doctrine of knowledge. How is His will related to the human will? This is the battle-ground of determinism and moral responsibility. Now this great problem, how the Divine and Eternal One could clothe Himself with the forms and conditions of human experience, so far as even to 'taste death' Himself, is a problem, the climax of all the preceding problems. They, as it were, lead up to it. The question, How does the divine mind work in relation to any process in time and space? is simply the vestibule of this grander problem —how the divine mind, which must have its distinctive experience of time and space, clothed itself in the conditions of human, temporal and spatial experience in the Person of Jesus Christ."[1] God in the world through creation is the prelude to God in the world through Christ; creation, including man, must be Christocentric, and Christ is Theocentric. The supreme question man was asking was: Could God Who is so exalted, so sublime, so transcendent to earthly things, could He, the Lord of all, so reveal Himself in that most real form, and thus provide him with the key, the solution, to all this dark and unintelligible world? Could He for ever enter Himself into man's suffering, sorrow, and pain, and by this means provide a remedy for the broken heart, a Saviour for the sinner's misdeeds, a relief for his utmost needs? Could He be, or was He, in any sense, afflicted in man's affliction? Did He heed the cry that arose continually from the lips of humanity? Did He sympathise with the yearnings and aspirations of man that were surely too real, too much in earnest, too nobly human, too much akin to the

[1] W. D. Mackenzie, in *E.R.E.* vol. VII, art. *Jesus Christ*.

divine, to be offered but in vain upon the altar of an Unknown God, a God Who neither heard, saw, nor understood? The silence of the ages had never been broken, faith was largely a product of illusion underpropped by sentiment. Time had handed over her answerers unsatisfied, because unanswered, to the ruthless jaws of Fate. Little wonder that the children of earth sometimes wavered, little wonder they well-nigh surrendered the quest after the great enigma; would God always keep silence, would He always play the part of the impassive listener to their passionate and desperate appeal? Was it not possible to fill the gulf that divided Him from them? Surely His sympathy, His Love, knows no bonds, no limitations, no impediments? For is He not Supreme in the heavenly sphere as well as upon earth? Is He not Lord of the universal laws and principles that keep the stars in their courses? Do not the heavens declare His glory and the firmament show His handiwork? "Can His observation of man suffering ever be a substitute for that suffering? To watch growth is not to grow, to understand dependence is not to live by its virtue. Now the Incarnation means that there is one final fact in His universe with which God would completely identify Himself, one fact not yet made His own which could become His own only in one way. Can He cross the gulf?"[1] Can He the Creator put the cup of humanity to His lips and taste even that human dependence in its very essence? "The Babe at Bethlehem, the tired Physician in Galilee, the praying servant of Jahweh, the Man on the Cross with the broken heart—what if all that means that HE has tasted what it is to be a man? And in Love."[2] 'The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us.' Christ has broken the Silence of the eternal ages, He has revealed to us the innermost heart, mind, and will of the everlasting Godhead; He, Who throughout eternity reclined in ineffable love upon the bosom of the Father, has appeared in the fulness of the times to bring the good tidings of great joy to all nations. Through Him, as having accomplished in Him one perfect and supreme sacrifice, the Sacrifice of Himself, the Atonement and Reconciliation of the whole world, all who will may attain peace,

[1, 2] W. D. Mackenzie, *op. cit.*

comfort, hope and rest; they may abide in Him as He abides in them. For them, sorrow, suffering, and shame have been baptised in Christ, they have received a divine consecration; for such are the purest gifts of love offered by Love on Love's own altar and received by Love's own hand. For them

> ...the sorrows are the tension-thrills
> Of that serene endeavour
> Which yields to God for ever and for ever
> The joy that is more ancient than the hills.[1]

Quitting now the language of the heart in favour of the language of the intellect, let us examine at closer quarters the main theological problems that lie embedded in our Christology, and await a profounder interpretation with the growth and progress of the speculative reason in our spiritual experience of God through Jesus Christ. We may recall an utterance, that partook in part of the nature of prophecy, by the late Archbishop Temple in the middle of the last century, and at the present day there exists abundant testimony to confirm the truth of the utterance: "Our theology has been cast in a scholastic mould, that is, all based on Logic. We are in need of and we are being gradually forced into a theology based on psychology. The transition, I fear, will not be without much pain; but nothing can prevent it." What is this but the avowal that the rigid categories of the understanding exclude, by their very nature, the subtler, finer, and more intimate harmonies that obtain within the spiritual world! What is this but a confession that unless we rise above the 'logic splitting faculty,' above *διάνοια*, into the purer air of *νοῦς*, where 'fluidity' and interpenetration take the place of division and exclusiveness, the problems of religion will yet remain to be solved. "The formula of Chalcedon is, in fact, a confession of the bankruptcy of Greek Patristic Theology."[2] "The 'substance' of the Greek Fathers, whether divine or human, has the material, not the spiritual characteristics; it is, in fact, an intangible matter."[3] The New Testament portrait of Christ presents the divine and human natures in an indissoluble union, a union which all may feel and

[1] T. E. Brown. [2, 3] W. Temple.

which is pronounced as most real by the spirit of man, but which, at the same time, contains that indefinable element that defies all analysis of its content. St John represents the historic consciousness of Jesus Christ as the perfect *union* of the natural and the supernatural. We only distort the beauty of the Johannine Christ through our false emphasis upon 'either,' 'or,' for this marks a lower level of thought than the 'both' 'and,' of the spiritual reason, reason in her highest mood. The central Figure of the Fourth Gospel is not 'now human, now divine,' nor is He the mysterious product of a divine united with, alongside of, a transcendent of, the human; but He is rather the 'divine supernatural becoming the human natural,' the divine in, through, and because of the human; the former is the thought duality of metaphysical reason, the latter the felt unity of spiritual consciousness; the former knows only of antithesis and contrast, the latter only of unity in antithesis, similarity through contrast. There is metaphysic, and there is the metaphysic of faith; to the one Christ is an enigma, a paradox, an inexplicable mystery, to the other He is the solution of the mystery. In Him first and last, beginning and end, real and ideal, absolute and relative, may behold each other. In Him, ἐν αὐτῷ, through Him, διὰ αὐτοῦ, and unto Him, says the Fourth Gospel, were all things created, He is the continuing and abiding cause. "Their organic unity is dependent upon Him. He is the final cause τέλος of all. The divine fulness τὸ πλήρωμα must finally dwell in Him and all things restored to their pristine unity ἀρχή in Him."

Our unspiritual theology, which is due to our unspiritual categories of thought, is continually blinding our eyes to the true relationships subsisting eternally in the spiritual world. If we have been warned to abandon the modes of thought of Greek metaphysics and adopt a more dynamic theology of God, Christ, and self, yet the opposite warning is no less to be heeded, namely, that the various forms of pragmatism, activism, and will-philosophies, that centre round W. James and Bergson, will lead us into an even worse *impasse*, by negating that eternity, changelessness, and abidingness which belongs, and has always been asserted to belong, to the spiritual world.

If we must bid farewell to our intellectualism as, in this enlightened age, an anachronism, we must also suspect our 'volitionisms' of being a modern superstition; if the intellect with its materialistic dogmatism is incapable of reaching the true problems of the spirit, the will is no less so; if one moves in antithesis so does the other; if one has its being in unfulfilled knowledge which is necessarily transcended in the True, the other has its being in unfulfilled desire, which is necessarily transcended in the Good; if the intellect empties the real by the imposition of limitations, the will blinds it, for it knows not whence it cometh or whither it goeth. In all our theological and philosophical problems our categories must partake of the nature of the objects with which they deal; when the Spirit and the spiritual world form the content of the objective side of knowledge, the subjective side, the form, must likewise correspond, for like can only be known by like.

Applying this knowledge to our Christology, Dr Moberly can say "Christ is God—not generically, but identically. Christ is Man—not generically, but inclusively." He is neither *a* God, nor *a* man, but God and Man. "As pure subjects, or formally, God and Christ *are* distinct, materially (in the content of consciousness) God and Christ are One and the Same. The human affections of Christ are God's affections; His suffering is God's; His love is God's; His Glory is God's."[1] "Will is distinct from Purpose, but apart from will, no purpose; thinking is distinct from thought, but apart from thought, no thinking."[2] Again he continues: "We are not forced to the belief that Christ is Absolute God in all His fulness of Being—('The Father is greater than I')—but the belief that in all which directly concerns the spiritual relation of Man to God, Christ is identically *one* with the Father in the content of His Being—('I and the Father are One')." "In Him there was active in the world the eternal Spirit of God and in Him we touch the divine Humanity which was always in the Godhead but only then was made fully manifest. The Everlasting Son of the Father, the Humanity of God which is eternally obedient to the Divinity of God—if the

[1, 2] W. Temple, in *Foundations*.

expression may be allowed—took flesh in the fulness of time, that, seeing Him, we might learn to love God."[1]

In Christ we are confronted with One Who stood in a unique, final, and absolute relation to God. No man ever spake as He spake; no man had beheld the face of the Father as He had beheld it; no man had proceeded out from God to come into the world; and no man was *conscious* of that unique filial relation that subsisted between Him and the Supreme God, which enabled Him to say, "No man knoweth the Father save the Son," "No man cometh unto the Father, but by ME." None but an unsound criticism, whether textual, literary, or philosophical, can ignore the claims of the Pauline and Johannine Christ. If they are the product of idealisation based upon spiritual experience, and they cannot well be otherwise, yet they receive the absolute sanction of the historic Jesus, and can alone interpret that historical Figure. The relation between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith is the whole problem of Christology, the whole problem of the Incarnation, but they never can be sundered without tears. Whatever forms our thought may assume in interpretation of the Christ, whatever approach commends itself to a particular age as best suited to unravel the mystery of that Supreme Person, the problem of Christology is surrendered when the Jesus of the Gospels is no longer the exalted Lord of the Epistles. Surely it was the Logos-conception, the identity of the Logos of Hellenistic metaphysics and of Hebraic theophany with Jesus of Nazareth, that converted the intellect of Europe to the New Faith; this was the Fourth Gospel's supreme gift to Christology, this secured the absoluteness of Christianity, by giving the Founder a transcendent and eternal dignity.

"He is more than God visualised, cast upon the screen of time and space, Who Himself is timeless and spaceless; He was not God masked or veiled under human form," we must avoid Docetism; He was more than a unique man, a supreme example of God's immanence in the world, we must avoid humanitarianism; but we may see His Godhead through His manhood,

[1] W. Temple, in *Foundations*.

we may exclaim "Jesus divinest when Thou most human art." In getting to know Him, we get to know God; in our contemplation of His manhood, we find ourselves being led on to His Godhead. The gulf that separates Christ from us can never be bridged by a doctrine of immanence. He was essentially, naturally, and by right 'God of God,' 'Light of Light'; we are joint-heirs with Him by reason of our participation in the Spirit that operates through His mediation. He was born wholly by the Spirit, no second birth for Him was possible, for this He possessed *à priori*, as being His very Spirit itself; we receive that Holy Spirit *à posteriori* through experience of grace a creature, to experience of God the Creator. He was inherently, and by the constitution of His nature, spiritual—even divine—we are so potentially only, the actualisation of such potentiality depending upon certain conditions. "He possessed 'naturally' such a consciousness of God, as no one else ever possessed, and standing in such a 'natural' relation of Sonship towards God as no one else ever pretended to stand in. While it is by the Holy Spirit that God is with or within any one of us, in Christ the Holy Spirit was *from the first* the very principle of His life and the centre of His Personality; from the first He was dominated, not by the flesh in any measure, but wholly by the Spirit, so that He was man wholly after the Spirit."

"He was *the* Son who had a unique consciousness of the Father, it was this original organic difference between Christ and all other men that gave Him His unique consciousness of God, and made Him know Himself as the Son of God and Son of man."[1]

Perhaps it is impossible, even if it is legitimate, to enquire more precisely into the growth of the Godhead of Jesus Christ in relation to the growth of His manhood. We have elsewhere held the theory that *qua* God, there was no development, this finding an application only to the manhood, and in consequence we repudiated the implications of a 'gradual incarnation,' as indicating an evolution within the Godhead. We are informed, however, from numerous quarters, that to speak of 'two natures' is a mistake, for this is to sunder what God has joined together,

[1] W. L. Walker, *The Spirit and the Incarnation.*

and no artifice will be of any avail to bind the fragments thus sundered into a complete union.

Can we then retain the true nature of Godhead in respect of its absoluteness while, at the same time, retaining the true nature of manhood in respect of its growth and development? Can we preserve the identity of personal consciousness in the One Person of Christ without doing violence to either the divine or the human, both of which must exist in their integrity within the One Incarnate Life? "'Gradual incarnation' is true only because the two-sided 'unio' cannot at the outset exist in the sphere of knowledge and volition proper, which presupposes self-consciousness; for neither human will nor consciousness can be actually existent at the outset."[1] The content must more and more adjust itself to the capacity of the form.

"For Christ the progress was IN personal unity with Godhead, not *to* it from outside. He unfolded that which had been enfolded within Him by eternal Love, to be restrained wholly within the bounds of manhood. 'The whole personality of Christ' is not something given at the outset by the existence side by side of the Divine and human natures, but something achieved by His Life's action!"[2]

These statements guard the divinity of Christ, while allowing play for the reality of the manhood, yet is the problem any further advanced towards a solution? That *His* progress was '*in* personal unity with Godhead, not to it from outside,' differentiates Him from all others, for they have always 'something to cast off, something to become,' for them it is never merely a case of realisation of their true natures; but we are not told in what way this would tend to harmonise the two natures, nor to adjust the content to the form; it would ensure a perfect life, a true self-realisation, because in unity with a perfect Being, but must this necessarily be true *only* of a *Divine* Being, an Incarnate God?

Again 'the unfolded' is 'the enfolded'; He Himself is the ground of His own development in time; the implicit Father comes to actuality in the manifested Son, He is in the Father

[1] Dorner. [2] H. R. Mackintosh, *op. cit.* J. K. Mozley.

because the Father is in Him; but is not this true in varying degrees in all men? The old problem of δύναμις and ἐνέργεια begins to take shape before us; the whole process of evolution is hidden from mortal ken. An excellent statement of the problem of the two natures is found in Dr Forsyth, but we could have desired even here a little closer correlation of the 'two poles' in Christ. "In Christ we have illustrated the two poles of spiritual being." "We have the whole perfect action of Godhead concentrated through one factor or hypostasis within it and directed manward both to create and to redeem; and we have also the growing moral appropriation by man's soul moving Godward of that action as its own, as its initial Divine nature and content"[1] (Forsyth). Godhead was both realised by, and the presupposition of, every action, thought, and feeling. God was both the Alpha and the Omega. "As the Father's gift it is Divinely real from the outset and sub specie aeternitatis. But also it is humanly actualised in time; it comes to fruition in One who 'passes from a destiny to a perfection through a career.'"[2] Such are some of the attempts that have been made to express the unity of Godhead and manhood in a single personal consciousness, without either surrendering the divinity or the reality of the humanity in the denial of a real growth, change, and development to the human life of Christ on earth.

In our next section we shall, as far as possible, avoid anticipating the central and culminating chapter of the essay wherein the main argument of the thesis is examined. The transition to our final argument from a discussion of Christ's revelation of man will be of a natural and continuous nature, as the subjects are most closely related and have an immediate bearing upon one another; under such circumstances, perhaps, repetitions of the same ideas in different contexts may be pardoned, as well-nigh unavoidable.

(*b*) *The Revelation of Man.*

Jesus Christ is both the Revealer of God and of Man. In Him we behold the true, real, and ultimate nature of the tran-

[1] Quot. Mackintosh. [2] Mackintosh.

scendent Godhead, for He alone knew the Father as He is; in Him we behold the Man after the pattern of Whom man should strive to copy, and in Whose life man should see his true life.

For us, as the Revealer of God, Christ is more than a unique man, more than one of the Jewish Rabbis who has reappeared under different conditions upon the world's stage, more than One in whom God was supremely immanent. In Him we may find more than a precious but 'quite undefinable spell of divinity,' for how are we then to differentiate Him from all the others in whom there is likewise such a spell? In Him, those who have eyes to see and hearts to love will discover more than a mere example of the divine immanence of God in humanity; for how then must we distinguish Him from the potential man, the inner man of the heart, in all men? Once again, in Him we can see more than the supreme and final revelation of humanity to itself, more than the revelation of Man to man, as *some* 'Modernists' would appear to deem a sufficient appreciation of His Person. He is the coping-stone of evolution, and the product of the terrestrial process of development, because He is its transcendent source, its transcendent ground, its final goal. He is the Revealer of divinity in humanity because He is the revealer of Humanity in Divinity. Immanence is the anticipation of Incarnation in which it culminates, while Incarnation is the crown of immanence and the centre from which it proceeds. Immanence is the radiance of Incarnation, yet the radiance is not the light; immanence encircles Incarnation, yet the circumference is not the centre. Just as the light always remains the light, and the centre, the centre, so Incarnation is confined to Christ. Just as the radiance reflects its original, or the circumference possesses its centre, so every man may find himself in Christ and in Christ find Himself; divinity in humanity is the prelude to Humanity in Divinity.

Now the Incarnation, by uniting Godhead and manhood into the absolute union of a personal life, exhibited once and for all the true nature of manhood in Godhead, of man as completely, fully, and perfectly Godlike. Christ showed man to himself by showing him his form and image when it reproduces without

defect its archetype and pattern. He showed him the eternal beauty and reality of the spiritual man as seen *sub specie aeternitatis*. In Christ are joined indissolubly two problems, which, for the purpose of discussion, it is legitimate to regard in disunion, always remembering that what analysis destroys it can never reconstruct. We have already approached the first in treating of 'the revelation of God.' Let us, through this revelation, examine 'the revelation of man.'

In a criticism of Dr Inge's *Outspoken Essays* Dr L. P. Jacks makes the following observation: "'The question we ought to ask is, since Christ is God, what may we infer about the nature of God?' (Inge). To be able to infer anything at all is significant. Does not this presuppose a previous absolute standard of judgment *within* me? What is the basis of the inference? If among the ruins of an ancient civilisation, say, on the Acropolis of Athens, we discover some consummate work of art, what inferences are we entitled to draw? They are twofold. In the first place we should infer the presence, among the men of that age, of a consummate artist to whom the work might be attributed....But this, our first inference, would carry a second equally important. This work of art, we should say, implies not only an artist capable of producing it, but a 'public' capable of appreciating it. It was not a pearl cast before swine. It was a pearl offered to beings who knew pearls when they saw them, could distinguish *true* pearls from sham, and rate them at their proper value. It proves not only that genius of Pheidias, who produced it, but the genius of the men of Athens, who, when they saw it, knew it for the real thing and valued it accordingly. All that we read from the Incarnation as to the nature of *God* compels us to interpret the nature of *man* in terms to correspond. In being a revelation of God it is also a revelation of the nature of *man* to which it is addressed, and in the absence of which it would be thrown away."

Such is the twofold aspect of the Incarnation, and each aspect complements and supplements the other; a revelation implies one who reveals, the revealing, and one to whom it is revealed; in every manifestation, therefore, a trinity is implicit. Christ

reconsecrated earth because He re-opened heaven, He exhibited a theophany in humanity because He revealed the Father. We should be able to say with Browning:

> That One Face, far from vanish(ing), rather grows,
> Or decomposes, but to recompose,
> Become(s) my universe that feels and knows.

Man, as he appears up to the present upon this earth, is incomplete, imperfect, a creature of time and space, and governed largely by the necessary conditions of his existence, being imposed upon by an external environment. It is only through and by means of the indwelling Spirit of Christ that he rises above his natural and normal self to share in eternal and spiritual being. The immanence of the Logos in man is an earnest of his ultimate reconciliation, redemption and union with God through Incarnation. The Logos has united Himself with us that we may unite ourselves with Him. "Thus God-in-Spirit shows *to* man what God-in-man means, whilst God the Holy Spirit in man realises the meaning of God-in-man *for* men."[1] Man is not man as yet, the natural has not yet been transfigured into the spiritual, the temporal into the eternal. Gregory of Nyssa attributes so little importance to 'persons' as known to us in the present stage of development, that he is inclined to lapse into an absolutism in which all selves are lost. He thinks it an abuse of language to speak of so many 'men'; each individual is but an 'hypostasis' of 'man.' "There is one human nature, manifesting itself in millions of separate selves. But just as the separate selves grow conscious of their own individuality, so we may believe that they will grow increasingly conscious hereafter of their common *οὐσία*. It is in union with the inclusive humanity of Christ that the individual attains to this realisation. To be 'in Christ' is to be fully ourselves." Rather than sacrifice the common *οὐσία* we would sacrifice the individuals who have their being solely through its being, their existence because it exists, and their individuality because of that mysterious property in *οὐσία* that manifests itself as unique-

[1] F. Platt.

ness in personal consciousness. We pass into true mystical language when we hear that "there would be a universal being in and for another; 'consciousness' would be the consciousness of 'another' which was also 'oneself'—a common consciousness."[1] This reminds us of Plotinus, for in his picture of the spiritual world he tells us that "there everyone sees all things in himself and all things in another." To penetrate to the very depths of personality, to completely explore the nature of the meanest fragment of creation, is to discover God; 'that One Face,' with its ever-varying expression, is the abiding feature of the world, and is but seldom absent from those who are fitted to behold It.

Making the transition from a philosophical to a religious standpoint it is instructive to hear Hegel remark that in love the multiplicity is subordinated to the unity, the persons are secondary to the Spirit revealed in each. Rather than our Loving God, the primary fact is His love for us, and our consequent love of His Love, or love of Himself in us; rather than our knowing Him, the primary fact is His knowledge of us, and our knowledge of being known by Him; rather than our willing His will, the primary fact is His willing of us, and our willing of His will in and for us. Throughout the emphasis must be upon the One Person of God in Christ, the ideal Man, in Whom we all are destined to come to a full stature. If the human spirit is 'capax Dei,' and this is involved in being an ectype of the Logos, it has not been perfected until it is 'in Deo,' and this is only possible 'per Christum,' for only through Him have we an absolute revelation of God. Spiritual consciousness cannot allow either the obliteration or the distinct separation of God and man. The Incarnation was a revelation both of the essential difference and of the essential affinity of divinity and humanity, and the sacrifice of either is the sacrifice of the Incarnation itself. For Plato the divine element within man renders him intrinsically human, for otherwise all immanence is a contradiction. "Man's chief end then is for him the knowledge of God and culminates in assimilation to His glorious image—

[1] Nettleship.

ὁμοίωσις θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν ἀνθρώπῳ. If ἀνδρείκελον is nothing but θεοείκελον, man is most manlike when he most resembles God."[1] Man's progress to God-likeness is through the process of self-transcendence; he must kindle the divine spark at the very core of his personality into flame, for, as the old mystic said, it has been lighted at the altar of God, and will light us to God, if we follow its lead. The great within always seeks the great without, the spark within strives to unite itself once again with the spiritual world, wherein it had its origin; and man is ever searching the One with Whom he desires to blend his being. In God, the Transcendent Reality, man comes to himself; he may there bathe in the shoreless waters of the Infinite, which know no limits and can never be plumbed. Just as God abides in and with Himself in essence, as pure Spirit, and goes forth from Himself in creation and revelation, so man, in his essence, abides in God, while in his action he abides in himself in God. The immanence of God in man is not yet, nor ever can be, an Incarnation of God in man, it is but the promise of perfect God-likeness, that is a possible attainment for all men; it speaks of the divinity of the latent humanity in all, it heralds the day when it may perfect the music of earth by beating in harmony with Humanity of the manifested Divinity in heaven. From the standpoint of soteriology and the problems connected with the will and moral life, it is easier to observe the impossibility of any *identification* of Christ with man. He develops within, we develop up to, God; He knows no sin and no repentance, no contrition and no remorse; we know both of sin and pardon, of repentance and forgiveness. Immanence implies dependence from without, Incarnation implies dependence from within, but not complete independence, such as must belong to the Absolute Father, for Incarnation involves some such self-emptying as is implied in the theories of Kenosis. Dr Moberly illustrates by contrast this distinction between Christ and man: "Unavoided they could not conquer sin. 'Nor do they so grow into oneness of Spirit with Him as to cease to be themselves who had sinned and are redeemed from sin....They are still, though sinless in

[1] H. M. Relton, *A Study in Christology*.

the Spirit of the Sinless, yet not simply sinless, but brought to sinlessness out of sin; not simply pure, but purified; not simply blessed, but beatified; not simply holy, but redeemed'" (Moberly). "As all that was thus historic in Jesus was typical, so through the Holy Spirit all that was typical in Jesus becomes historic again in His brethren. This is the solution of the baffling problem how the immanence of God in the sinless Man Jesus, which is one thing, can comprehend the Divine immanence in sinful men, which is quite another thing. 'He became what we are that He might make us what He is.'"[1] Only by virtue of the universality of Christ's humanity can the fulness of His life be shed abroad in His brethren, only because He was *God* can He be the eternal Mediator of that Holy Spirit at once omnipresent and omniscient. The mystical or spiritual union of man with Christ in God cannot be apprehended either by an Absolutism that, in the attempt to transcend *particular* Incarnation, really falls outside it, or by a doctrine that denies to Christ the supreme title of Godhead, both in its ontological and its spiritual sense. Strauss fell into the former error by exalting the race above the Person of Christ: "The Idea loves not to pour all its fulness into one example in jealousy towards all the rest. Only the race answers to the Idea." He consequently could never rise above a monistic Christianity in which finite and infinite, man and God, were inextricably blended. Humanity seemed to be the synthesis of God's humiliation in creation and man's exaltation in God, God's Kenosis and man's plerosis. Some adherents of the modern school of to-day are inclined to fall into the second error, that of denying the predicate of 'Absolute' to Christ. He has faith rather than is the object of faith; He falls under the category in which all other God-inspired men have their place, although He is the supreme member of the class; there can be no vital distinction between Him and them, or them and us. "Jesus' place in the doctrinal system is not at the centre, but among the 'means of grace.' In a certain loose sense it may be fitting to say that we find God 'in' Jesus, but the time has gone past for speaking as if God had received us 'for Christ's sake,'

[1] F. Platt.

or for bowing to the Absolute claim: 'No man cometh unto the Father but by Me.'" Such an attitude has surrendered all the essentials that Christianity has to offer to the world. The Pauline and Johannine Christ must ever remain a mystery, an enigma, a contradiction to such a belief regarding the status of His Person. All that gives atonement meaning, all that reveals Incarnation as absolute, all that presents the historic Figure in the Gospels as of such inestimable worth, of such priceless charm, of such a universal attraction, cannot live for long, nor could it have lived and increased in power and truth, upon such a relative foundation as this. If we diminish the absoluteness, finality, uniqueness, of the revelation in Christ, we also diminish the Absoluteness, finality and uniqueness, of the faith in Christ. If in Christ we do not behold very God of very God, then are all our dogmas, doctrines and creeds vain; our hope is also vain, and we are yet in our sins. History and experience are enough, however, to convince us that in the Jesus of Nazareth we can behold the Incarnate God in our midst, Who is already in anticipation the exalted Christ sitting at the right hand of God. In the Christ of faith and Christian consciousness we can behold One in Whose hands are the print of the nails and in Whose side the print of the wound. The term 'absolute,' when applied to Jesus Christ, is the only attribute that will justify spiritual experience, which is a true foretaste of, a true ante-chamber to, absolute experience.

Neither an *identity* of God and man, nor a diminution of the revelation of God and man in Christ, will solve our problem of the relation between God, Christ, and man. Immanence must be substituted for 'immanentism,' Christ must be substituted for humanity, mystical union (through spiritual to absolute experience) must replace 'mysticism,' and the Absolute must replace 'Absolutism.'

In spite of an apparent, although maybe not real, contradiction, we may retain the essential divine basis of Christ's Incarnate life as immutable, persistent, and unchangeable, while fully admitting the reality of the growth of His humanity. The identity of Himself with the eternal Logos necessitates the

postulate of His transcendence, as being the ground upon which and the environment in which His immanent human life develops to maturity. As Logos He was both the presupposition and the climax of His development in time, and as Man He was completely dependent upon and receptive of Himself as Logos.

To deny the abidingness of the Divine in Him is to deny the Godhead; to deny the growth of the human is to deny the manhood; while to deny the synthesis of divine and human in a personal consciousness is to deny the Incarnation. In maintaining the growth of the Divine-human consciousness of Christ *as a whole*, Dorner observes that the Incarnation is thus continuous, augmentative, "seeing that God as Logos ever apprehends and appropriates such new aspects as are generated by the true human development, just as, conversely, the growing actual receptiveness of the humanity combines consciously and voluntarily with ever new aspects of the Logos." "The Logos is from the beginning united with Jesus in the deepest bases of being, and the life of Jesus was Divine-human at *every* point, inasmuch as a receptiveness never existed for the Deity without its fulfilment." It is instructive to compare this statement with that of Dr Weston, who seems to share a similar view regarding the humanity of Christ in relation to the divinity: "As God in manhood, as God self-conscious in manhood, He is not at birth perfect in the sense of complete attainment; but only in the popular sense of being free from sin and from the lack of anything necessary to Him at the stage of life in which He was." Both of these writers see in Jesus Christ the growth of a manhood that is wholly immanent within the Godhead; they see capacity and content, receptiveness and reception, in complete fulfilment of each other; they see Him perfect at each and every stage of His development until manhood *fully* reveals divinity. Such a life, the dialectic of which we have been attempting to describe, is unique, absolute, and marks an Incarnation of the Logos on earth. Many thinkers, approaching this problem of the *uniqueness* of Christ from divergent angles, have been brought to recognise the gulf that divides Him from all else; they have

endorsed the poet's utterance that "Eternal form shall still divide the Eternal Soul from all beside." Christianity may never allow any rival to her Founder, howsoever exalted he may be, and to whatever dignity he may rise; she must stand fast to the absolute claim He makes for Himself, and the absolute allegiance He demands of all men. Dr Mackintosh has emphasised the distinction in the following terms: "To exist humanly is to unfold capacities originally present *in nuce*; the differential feature of Christ is the unique degree of capacity posited in the fact that He is God's Son in flesh. Whereas in any other child there exists the potency only of a completed finite self-consciousness, in Christ the potency is infinite." Man, when perfect, is only completely man, completely human, but Christ when completely Man is completely God, completely divine. Dr Caird expresses the difference thus: "The union of the human with the Divine in the person and life of Christ 'includes' an element which differentiates it from the spiritual life and experience of all other men—there is the manifestation of a principle which was not a birth of time, but which had its source and origin in the eternal being and life of God." W. N. Clarke speaks of the "distinction by falling back upon the divinity of the Spirit in Christ as having a transcendent origin in God Himself": "In Jesus the Divine provided the Spirit, the Spirit that constituted His personality was Divine," while "the fact that the Spirit was living within human limitations, spiritual as well as physical, rendered the personality human." Dr Orr leaves open a sphere for the working of the divine transcendence above and beyond the human life of Jesus as Incarnate, thereby obscuring his precise interpretation of Dr Moberly's words, "The Incarnate never leaves His Incarnation." His statement is that "the Divine Son took upon Him our nature with its human limits, but above and beyond that, if we may so express it, was the vast oversoul of His Divine Self-consciousness." In our recognition of this solitariness of Jesus Christ the equal recognition of His *inclusive* relation to the race is no less vital and essential. In Him the particular and universal meet, in Him each man can find himself, and in himself find Him. Man's

ideal is in Him in himself, and his reality is in himself in Him. God is in him by faith that he may be in God by fulfilment, in him by immanence that he may be in Him by Incarnation. Christ is therefore the Life of our life, the Soul of our soul, the Spirit of our spirit, the inmost and most intimate Person Who reveals to each and all their true natures, and Who can remould and transform *de novo* the very being of our lives. "He is definable as the Person Who can thus be our inward life, while on the other hand it is because He is this universal Person that His relation to us can be of this interior kind. Personality and possession mutually condition each other. To sustain this unparalleled relation to men, to impart Himself to them so that they have Him within and can hold fellowship with Him as with their own souls—this is a capacity or act which we can only interpret as specifically divine."[1] And conversely Principal Fairbairn says: "The nature that is in all men akin to Deity becomes in Christ a nature in personal union with the Deity, and the *unio personalis*, which is peculiar to Him, is the basis of the *unio mystica*, which is possible to all."[2] Thus the uniqueness of Christ renders possible the consummating relation in which He stands to all other men; He cannot be merely a member of the race Who is placed in such a universal relation to it as to include it in Himself. His Humanity having the *à priori* element within it can only be the ideal of our humanity, it must therefore have its source in God, or be the Humanity of God, if humanity needs God for its fulfilment and is only perfected in Him. Christ is intensively all men, not extensively, qualitatively not quantitatively; the union which is all-inclusive is a *spiritual* union and only gradually accomplished as man grows more and more Godlike. But since He is thus the spiritual Ideal of men, the eye of sense that moves in time and space, and the eye of the mind that moves in abstract and antithetic categories, must be replaced by the eye of the spirit that knows only of eternity in contrast to time, and union in contrast to diversity. In so far as each man beholds the world, himself, and God, with the Spirit, he will behold Christ incorporate with all. "He

[1] H. R. Mackintosh. [2] A. M. Fairbairn, *Christ in Modern Theology*.

becomes all-inclusive—not because we are merged in Him but because He is revealed, and we become like Him when we see Him as He is." "The universality of Our Lord's humanity is only explicable upon the fact that His Personality is a divine one. It is only God in it that can make it applicable to all or the truth of all....Every man can find himself in Christ, and in Christ find himself. The only true idealism or realism, the doctrine that the ideal is the real, is to be found in the New Testament doctrine of Jesus Christ. The divine ideal is the only certain and true real."[1] Attempts have been made to conceive the relation of Christ to man through analogies drawn from the spiritual experience of sympathy. Through sympathy, which is but one stage removed from love, we seem to be able to enter into the experience of others so as to share their joys and sorrows, their hopes and fears. But can we verily and indeed share their own experience, as it is experienced by them themselves? Can sympathy rise to that height of intensity when their joy is our joy, their sorrow our sorrow, not mediately and indirectly, but immediately and absolutely? Can we ever, while remaining ourselves, and in possession of our own conscious life, through sympathy pass into them and live their life, as they are living it? Here we touch upon the fundamental nature of the 'self,' in which is involved the nature of God and Christ. If logic is out of court with all its categories, there must be no predication of *identity* between person and person, nor must we admit ultimate *separation* for the same reason; the relation is a spiritual one, since it exists between spiritual beings. If there is in the 'absolute' a realm where 'relation' as such is transcended, and thereby the whole world of Spirit and spirits, then perhaps in this latter sphere, but here only, the experients *would coincide*, and their experiences be *one* experience, for all plurality and multiplicity is subordinated to the Absolute Unity. For Christianity, which knows no higher nature of God than that revealed in Christ, this philosophical principle of personality finds its parallel in the relation there asserted to subsist between Him and man. The divine sympathy of the Son of God carried

[1] Du Bose, *The Gospel according to St Paul.*

Him to the utmost extreme of an entire self-renunciation, an entire poverty, to be able to enter into all the sorrows and suffering of humanity; it led Him to be afflicted in all their afflictions. He alone can so fully share their experience, that their joys are His joys in them, their sorrows are His divine sorrows. What no finite spirit, *qua* finite, may accomplish, He can accomplish by virtue of His uniqueness as divine Son of God; what a divine humanity could not effect, Deity within the limitations of humanity has effected. If man is man only in Man, then Christ in man is Man for men; if there cannot be replacement of human personality by another human personality, through whatever intensity of love and sympathy, there may be yet replacement of human personality by divine personality, not so that the human personality is annulled, but that the human personality may be truly human. As Christ is in God, and God in Him, so man can be in Christ, and He in him; but this is not to lose the distinction between Christ and God, nor between man and Christ. "Life cannot be replaced by a Higher Life; thought cannot be replaced by a Higher Thought; consciousness cannot be replaced by a Higher Consciousness; but life, and thought, and consciousness may be appropriated by a Higher Owner. The function of nature is to live; the function of personality is to own."[1] If Christ is the 'Higher Owner' of the life of every man, then He may appropriate such a life, and in appropriating consummate it. The inherent difference that separates Him from us can alone preserve all that is of intrinsic and absolute value in Christianity. He was unique, and because of this uniqueness, not in spite of it, He stands in that inclusive relation to all men that constitutes the power, the holiness, the wonderful attractive force of His living Personal Presence. "If then the Incarnation signifies the coming to be of a manhood," it is yet a manhood, a human personality capable of a content impossible to human individuality as we know it—a unique and incommunicable relation to God, and a 'collective' and equally incommunicable relation to the race.

[1] A. Vonier, *The Personality of Christ*.

It is not within our province here to enquire into the relation of the Son to God the Father, nor the relation of the Son to the Spirit, although both of these relations have necessary implications in a discussion of Christ and man. Within the New Testament itself there are no sharp lines of distinction drawn between the offices of the Persons of the Trinity; this was rather the work of subsequent dogmatic thinkers, translating spiritual relations of the religious consciousness, which are always indistinct, into philosophical relations of the understanding which are but the skeleton of religion. We instinctively feel that the dichotomy is too real, too rigid, between the Son and the Spirit in Fairbairn's words, "While the Son enables us to understand the being and action of personality *within* the Godhead, the Spirit enables us to conceive its being and action *without*." Reciprocity must be the law of 'within' and 'without,' and the 'without' must reflect and mirror the 'within.' The Spirit reveals the Son, and the Son reveals the Father; we advance by the method of Spirit and Christology to the goal, Theology. "'The Spirit is to be known in His working, not in Himself, yet even here, in the creative and cosmical spheres, it is hard to distinguish between His operation and that of the Son; nor in the moral world can we differentiate the illuminating Spirit from the Logos 'that lighteth every man.'"[1] The Spirit is God in action rather than God in essence; the worlds were created by the Spirit through the Logos, Who is the mediator of the Spirit's action both in the physical and moral spheres. With respect to the internal relations in the Godhead, the Spirit is constituted by, rather than constitutes the relation between Father and Son; He has Being, Life, and Existence because they exist, He is the effulgence of their glory, partaking of the nature of each. All revelation of God to man is by the Spirit, through the Logos, of the Father; it therefore contains an implicit triplicity which is of its very essence. The other problem of the Incarnate Life that has received no direct treatment here concerns the obscure relation of the natures in Christ. Admitting His oneness with God, we may ask whether it was exhausted

[1] D. W. Forrest.

by His experience on earth, whether it fell within His own personal consciousness, or whether it had a transcendental ground in the Being of God, while the experience on earth was but a symbol of this uncreated and eternal relation lying without His personal consciousness. The problem would vary according to the particular view held of the Kenosis prior to Incarnation, and precisely what was renounced to confine Deity within the limitations of humanity. However interesting these questions may be they lie beyond our present scope, which confines itself to the revelation of man as effected by the Incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Now the fundamental character of God is Love; this is the highest truth that Christ has made known to us in Incarnation, it is the noblest vision of the saint, the most sublime rapture of the seer, the light in the eyes of the sage. But if Love is supreme there are no *à priori* reasons why it should act in this way rather than in that, why it should adopt one method rather than another. If omniscience is the omniscience of love then all conditions are of its own making, all laws expressions of its own operations, and all principles executions of its own mandates. It is high time to take the lesson to heart that to be wise beyond what is written in the pages of history, is to do violence to the Figure in the Gospels, instead of to enhance It. In such matters simplicity and childlikeness are our safest guides, for they keep the intellect, which at times is inclined to become over-ambitious, in due subordination to the heart; they trust rather to the Reason above reasons, to faith above fancies, and to service above speculations. "*Non multa sed multum* was the signature of His career; to put more into His life-programme would in fact have been to put infinitely less"; or, as T. H. Green has said: "It is because Jesus under limiting conditions, lived a life which is limited to no conditions, and under special circumstances proclaimed a principle which is applicable to all circumstances that His life and His principle are rightly called absolute." The universal becomes absolute by putting on particularity, extensity has its true being in intensity, space and time have their reality in spacelessness, or the non-spatial, and eternity. Spiritual

being is not abstract, immense, nor subject to change; these are but signs and symbols of division from it, the shadows being, nevertheless, *true* shadows of the true substance; but it is absolute, and therefore possesses those external characteristics without being possessed by them; it gives them what reality they have while transcending them in its inner nature.

Such is the direction along which we are led in approaching the Christ of the New Testament from the spiritual and religious conception of Love in contrast to the philosophical, and perhaps *à priori* method pursued by pure thought, from its abstract foundations and presuppositions.

But the impression He leaves upon us, as He lives from the history into the experience of men, bears ample testimony also to this absoluteness of His Person, and thereby justifies the absolute claim He made upon the lives and souls of all men. If He is able not simply to present to the world the noblest example of humanity, not simply to perform acts and miracles never performed before, not simply to utter words and proclaim a teaching never uttered or proclaimed before, not simply to propound the most elevated ethic and enunciate the sublimest moral parables that the world has ever dreamed; if, besides all this, He has *reproduced* in His followers, by an interior operation of the Holy Spirit, His own character, His own personal life; if He pointed to Himself as the consummation and climax of His words and works, and if He still points to Himself as the sole means through which all men may obtain the Spirit to live as He lived, then we may not hesitate to ascribe to Him absolute Godhead. "This is a work which God alone *can* do, done in One Who was and is Man in men. It is Divine-human work done by a Divine-human Person." "His Divinity must be sought in THIS His distinctive work. We must not persist in knowing Christ after the flesh, His manifestation *in Spiritu* is dependent upon *us* largely. We have failed to prove Christianity, yet Christianity is largely shut up to us for proof."[1]

The writer from whom I quote proceeds to deal with the problem involved in this change of centre as man moves from

[1] E. C. Tainsh, *The Christian Hypothesis*.

an egocentric to a Christocentric basis. He arrives at the conclusion reached above, that it is only because Christ is the divine Son of God, only because there can be no *identity* of humanity at its highest point with divinity, that He *can* thus appropriate the life of man to work His will therein. "That an already existing person should be so incorporated with another person as to have his life fount in him, put psychologically, appears as incredible as Nicodemus seemed to find it; but given that the other Person is the Eternal Son of God made Man; given that from our native stock we derive only mere human powers and aims; given that the work of the kingdom of heaven far outsoars the purest human, and is the outcome of an act wherein God, while remaining God, becomes other than God for its accomplishment: then, union with Christ—through which, in proportion to our faith and will, we may derive from Him all that in His Divine Humanity He is, to make us all that He would have us to be, and to be used by us for the furthering of all that in His Divine Humanity He purposes—begins to have a meaning in spite of its mystery. To make it mean more we have to meditate how He differs from us, what He asks *in* us, and what is the work to which He calls us. All turns upon the Incarnation and its uses: apart from these, Regeneration would be a baseless dream; with them, God being God, the work and purpose of Christ being what they are, and the condition of man being what it is, Regeneration, in spite of its mystery, is profoundly natural."[1] Upon this central and basic relation of Christ to man is bound up the whole doctrine of the solidarity of the race, the justice of vicarious suffering, which is not a denial of each man bearing his own burden, and all the problems connected with Atonement and Redemption as accomplished by Jesus Christ. The immanence of God in man was the preface to Incarnation and contained, in the eternal counsels of the Most High, the stupendous fact of a Love that was already suffering on behalf of man. The Incarnation revealed the innermost heart of Love; and the extreme self-emptying of Christ for our sake revealed that self-sacrifice to the uttermost is the method of Love's

[1] E. C. Tainsh, *op. cit.*

working with the loveless. It was none other than God that suffered for sin, and consequently none other than God that could redeem; "God so loved the world, that He gave...," but also 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.' It was only because Christ includes us all in being, that He includes us all in redemption; only because we are all One Man in Him may we plead:

> Look, Father, look on His anointed Face,
> And only look on us as found in Him.

This was the momentous fact that the world desired to know. Did *God* really care for man and his suffering, did He really heed his cry and would *He* ever come to his rescue? But it was God and *none other* that could allay the wounds of humanity, and bind up the broken heart; it was *God* Whose sacred Heart had been pierced by man's sin, and *He* alone could be propitiated by the personal advent of His Son. "That *God* is a Saviour is a great fact in the invisible realm of existence, which men greatly needed to know" (Clarke). "Deus ipse, ipse sacerdos, ipse hostia, pro se, de se, sibi satisfecit" (Wessel). "In Christ we behold not only a reconciled, but a reconciling Deity, an incarnate God who, in the sinner's place and for the sinner's salvation, furnishes all this perfect nature of holy Love required for self-expression to a self-possession in man."[1]

Atonement is preliminary to union with God through the Holy Spirit, and as in Christ we all have access to the Father through His atoning merits, so in Him by the Holy Spirit we all have union with the Father, through His union with Him. Immanence of the Spirit is the result of Incarnation, and the work performed by the Incarnate, but this is to admit the essential divinity of the Mediator of the Spirit. As Dr Moberly has observed, we shall only be able to arrive at a satisfactory doctrine of atonement, through a satisfactory doctrine of Pentecost; the interior operation of the Holy Spirit that transforms lives internally and radically is the presupposition of the possibility of remission of sins by the same divine influence. Immanence,

[1] F. Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought*.

Atonement, Regeneration and finally Union are but stages of the process of that universal love which knows no obstacles, no barriers, no limitations, that can hinder its ultimate embrace with the beloved. "He that searcheth the heart knoweth what is in the mind of the Spirit." "For we feel that the voice of the Paraclete within the veil of the spirit of man answers to the voice of the Advocate within the heavenly veil, and these together answer to the mind of the Father, of Whom Jesus Himself has said, 'I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father Himself loveth you.' God's advocate within man is one with man's Advocate with God."[1] From all sides, Soteriology, Christology, and the Philosophy of Religion, concur in attesting the reality of Christ's Deity, His unique difference from all the sons of men, and the ultimate union of all men with Him to the glory of the Father. Each of these respective branches of a completed Theology, of the science of the nature of God, will ever more closely approach each other, and by so doing endorse each other, if they are the outcome of a felt and experienced Saviour, a felt and experienced Christ, and a felt and experienced Absolute; they will each bear witness to the truth of all if they have a permanent, substantial, and sound foundation in spiritual experience. The nature of this experience can alone ensure the nature of the object of this experience, faith must reflect revelation, experience the experienced, and subjective the objective. Mutual reciprocity is the law of spirit, it is also the law of every order below spirit. Perhaps we err on the right side if we assign the pre-eminence in religious experience rather to the Absolute object than the absolute apprehension of that object, rather to the revelation and the Revealer than to faith the recipient, rather to Love than to love. If 'what' we believe is more significant than 'that' we believe, it must be because the 'that' is conditioned by the nature of the 'what,' the one is the determined, the other the determinant. "We do not believe things *because* of an experience, but we do IN an experience. They are not true by the experience, but for it." "The great matter, therefore, is not *that* I feel, but *what* I feel. If I believe

[1] F. Platt, *op. cit.*

in Christ, it is not because I *feel* Him, but because I feel *Him*." "The real ground of our certitude, therefore, is the nature of the thing of which we are sure, rather than the nature of the experience in which we are sure."[1]

Now without unduly anticipating our following chapter, let us join the revelation of man as manifested by Christ with a few transitional remarks relating to Incarnation and immanence. Taking as our point of departure the doctrine of the Logos, we observed above that in the Logos Incarnate something absolutely *new* had entered the world, and yet, at the same time, something absolutely old. In Incarnation God preserved the same methods of working that He had always used, for how else could He have completed His work, His purpose, and His plan, by such an Incarnation; how else could Creation have contained Incarnation in its bosom, and Incarnation have been the prelude to the reign of the Spirit upon the earth? But the Incarnate was an *absolute* revelation of God, and as such for ever to be distinguished from man, to whatever degree of holiness and God-likeness he may attain. He was at *every* stage of His career perfect and divine. He *was* God always, He *became* Man in the fulness of the times; He was altogether divine, and altogether human, not partly divine, partly human, because He was the Divine Son of God living a human life. St Thomas Aquinas inclines too much to the divine side of the Christ's life as Incarnate, making it difficult to see in what sense He really possessed a perfect human nature at all, and in what sense He was able to share in all man's weaknesses to which as man, even in perfection, he must always be subject. For him, Christ's human weakness results from the restraining of the divine action by the divine will, but it is not a weakness of the flesh; His soul beheld Beatific Vision in His first entrance into the world. His knowledge was gradually acquired, but this not out of need, but out of necessity imposed upon Him by Kenosis in Incarnation. "Before His Passion He was *comprehensor* as well as *viator*." Is not such a view a divorcement of the Divine from the human? Would it not be truer, according to Aquinas, to speak of God

[1] P. T. Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*.

and Man, with the emphasis upon the 'and'? Does he make any attempt to reconcile the natures in the unity of the Person? Rather would we prefer Dr Moberly's statement of the manner of Incarnation, "He is not so much God *and* Man as God, in and through, and as man. He is one indivisible Personality throughout....The Incarnate never leaves His Incarnation. God, as man, is always, in all things, God as *man*. He no more ceases, at any point, to be God under methods and conditions essentially human, than under these essentially human methods and conditions He at any point ceases to be God." We must preserve the integrity of the Person while retaining, without confusion, the distinction between the natures. If the divine nature still maintained its infinity when in union with the human, the human maintained its limitations when in union with the divine; the human nature was the created within the uncreated, and as there was no merging of the finite, so there was no limitation of the infinite.

Now can we interpret fully and adequately the Person of Jesus Christ in terms of the perfect immanence of God in Him? Will the doctrine of immanence satisfy the conditions of Incarnation by revealing the natural relations of divinity and humanity in their proper proportions and connexions? Was Jesus Christ a man in whom God was supremely immanent in the same way, although in a far greater degree, than in all other men? "Was there not something Divine that was more and closer than the most perfect and intimate indwelling of Another?" Now the term 'immanence' is primarily of philosophical import, and it expresses the relationship inferred between the relative and the absolute, between creation and creation's Source. It is insufficient to describe the manner in which the Holy Spirit is present in spirits who share in the life of Christ, for this is a Presence Itself of a transcendent kind, possessing a quality unknown and incomprehensible to pure immanence. But if the Holy Spirit is conditional upon Incarnation and Exaltation, immanence is, therefore, still less able to interpret the cause of the Presence of the Holy Spirit, which must be, at the very least, as great as its result. According to the

general law that lower must always be interpreted by higher, Incarnation can comprehend immanence, but not immanence Incarnation. "Christianity holds that there is a Divine-human personality in Jesus that is more than the incarnation of God in a man. He is Himself God; He is God incarnate. They are one. 'He was with God and *was* God.'"[1] If the conception of an 'incarnation of God in a man' is not contradictory, yet we must maintain that this would not account for the Person of Christ. Nor again would a *progressive* incarnation realise what we mean by 'the Incarnation,' for then Christ would *become* God, and time would become a factor in the life of an eternal Being, Who must be beyond time. Such a being, moreover, who *became* God, would owe endless gratitude to God for His bestowal of Godhead upon it, but Christ possessed Godhead by right, by nature, and by virtue of being God's Son, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. The former would be a creature raised to the prerogative of Deity, he would have a beginning in time; the latter was for ever co-eternal with God, always God, and had no beginning in time. And once more, how on the presupposition of progressive incarnation should we construe our Kenotic theories and our doctrine of pre-existence? The impression is irresistible that we are moving upon a lower plane than that which Christianity acknowledges in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. With the present tendency to stress the dangerous doctrine of *some* types of idealism, that nothing foreign or external to the mind can ever enter it by any conceivable process, all development, all evolution being but the unfolding of immanent reality within, which is excited by stimuli from an environment, we may well fear that Incarnation, if interpretable solely in immanental terms, would be but the result of this interior evolution. Perhaps such a doctrine would not be content to stop even here; holding that Deity resides in the heart of mankind alone, it might reverse the Christian point of view and say that, so far from man being a thought in the mind of God, God is but a thought in the mind of man. "If immanence is allowed as sufficient it is feared that Incarnation would only

[1] F. Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought*.

mean the unfolding of the Divine possibilities of humanity into their consummate flower in Jesus, instead of the entering into humanity of the eternally pre-existent Son of God, which is the fundamental Pauline and Johannine conception of the Incarnation."[1] Throughout our treatment of the doctrine of Immanence we observed that it cannot be divorced from the complementary conception of transcendence; to so divorce it is to substitute pantheism for immanence. Transcendence gives itself to immanence, yet does not give itself to it, it passes into it and yet abides in its own proper unity. Together they constitute the abstract forms of Incarnation, yet Incarnation is not simply the synthesis of two philosophical abstractions.

Once more, does the immanental theory imply that divinity can be fully and completely manifested in humanity, does it imply that God is *exhausted* in and through perfect humanity, or that given a perfect man *ipso facto* we are presented with an Incarnate God? If such is a necessary implication of immanentism, then, as we have argued above, this is not the Christian conception of Christ. He is Absolute. Even a perfect man *à priori* would derive his perfection through the Logos, from Whom he derives his constitution, his existence. Perfection is by no means synonymous with hypostatic union, for the former is possible, abstractly, for all men, but the latter belongs to the Second Person of the Trinity, alone, that is, to Jesus Christ. F. Platt draws the following interesting conclusion from the inability of perfect humanity to express perfect divinity; the position "that all divinity was not capable of being expressed in all humanity, even in the perfect humanity of Jesus, implies not only that God transcends the human, but that God transcends the human Jesus." He would be prepared to acknowledge a subordination doctrine of the Son, during His life on earth, if by "the human Jesus," he means Jesus as Incarnate, and not the abstraction, 'the human nature' in Jesus. Such a conclusion would follow if the latter alternative were indicated, while the subordination of Christ to God, *as Incarnate*, received overwhelming support from the New Testament narrative of

[1] F. Platt, *op. cit.*

His life, especially in the instance of the Fourth Gospel where His divinity receives the most absolute confirmation.

Christ stands alone, and by Him must all things, all men, all creation be interpreted; He is the solution of the world's mystery, and not its problem; He is the beginning and end of the world's evolution and not the highest member of its ever-developing processes. He transcends the physical, moral, and spiritual realms, He is exalted far above all the children of men. He is separated from sinners and distinct from saints. "Our consciousness of God indwelling is derived and dependent; He was original and underived. He was chequered by no moral vicissitudes, He was truly 'the firstborn amongst many brethren.' He was the Only-Begotten, His brethren were His only through a second birth—heirs of God, because joint-heirs with Him; theirs by grace, His by right, 'For of His fulness have we all received, and grace for grace.'" "Even when the day dawns and 'we dwell in God and God in us,' because we dwell in Love, the Divine immanence then perfected in human nature will be distinct from that displayed in the 'Only-Begotten Son.'"[1]

By the doctrine of immanence, 'all tended to mankind,' and man was the crown of nature; he was the microcosm that could truly reflect, as in a living mirror, the macrocosm; but the crown of man was Christ, his express Archetype and ideal Pattern. If the true description of God's working is that

> ...He dwells in all,
> From life's minute beginnings, up at last
> To man—the consummation of this scheme
> Of being, the completion of this sphere
> Of life; whose attributes had here and there
> Been scattered o'er this visible world before,
> Asking to be combined, dim fragments meant
> To be united in some wondrous whole,
> Imperfect qualities throughout creation,
> Suggesting some one creature yet to make,
> Some point where all those scattered rays should meet
> Convergent in the faculties of man.[2]

[1] F. Platt, *op. cit.*
[2] R. Browning, *Paracelsus.*

If this is immanence yearning for mankind and pointing to man as the fulfilment of nature, with Incarnation begins anew the 'tendency to God.' In Christ we are confronted with "the very God!" He reveals to us the men we ought to be, the men we must be, the men we are destined to be; and if when the day dawns and 'we dwell in God and God in us,' because 'we dwell in Love,' and *yet* we are still distinct from Him, the 'Only-Begotten'—which we shall be—we may find consolation in the thought that we shall then behold

A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like to me,
Thou shalt love and be loved by, for ever: a Hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the Christ stand![1]

[1] R. Browning, *Saul.*

CHAPTER VII

IMMANENCE, TRANSCENDENCE, *and* INCARNATION

THROUGHOUT the whole work there has been an anticipation of the conclusion to be reached in this chapter, where the problem of the relation of Immanence and Incarnation directly confronts us. We are now in a position to meet the main thesis of our subject, having treated of both the conceptions of immanence and Incarnation in so far as these mutually bear upon each other and condition each other. Before such preliminary examination had been undertaken we could have arrived at no sound conclusions respecting our problem, inasmuch as both conceptions of immanence and Incarnation were vague and uncertain in the extreme, being surrounded on all sides with clouds and thick darkness, due in part to the various contexts in which these two terms were set. If the somewhat lengthy prelude has enabled us to elucidate our thoughts concerning the fundamentals of immanence and Incarnation it has not been in vain. The chapter on philosophical conceptions, if it did not tell us what immanence was, attempted, by way of negative definition, to tell us what it was not; and this is, perhaps, no little gain in an age when philosophical terms have lost their usual connotation, for when they mean anything it is too often the case that they mean *nothing*. Our discussion of Incarnation essayed to determine, out of all the misfortune into which that term has fallen, what precisely the conception signified, and what was the significance of the *act* of Incarnation for the world. The former could be accomplished only by treatment of some of the diverse attitudes adopted towards Incarnation, which resulted from its having been approached from divergent aspects; the latter resolved itself into the revelation effected by Christ of God and man.

Let us now embark upon the final issue to the whole problem, combining the many threads of our former arguments into a coherent and consistent unity.

If we may once again state the problem before us to avoid unnecessary confusion, it may be summed up in a sentence:

What is the relation between a conception of Incarnation as implied in such words as "God was *in* Christ," "My Father is greater than I"; and "The Word became Flesh," "I and My Father are One"? Here is the crux of the whole matter; for in the former two quotations immanence alone seems to be necessary to interpret His Person, namely the immanence of God in Him, while in the latter we have "Very God of Very God," an ontological unity asserted between Him and His Father, for which the predicate of His essential Godhead is demanded. In what way must we reconcile the immanental with the incarnational views of His Person? Where are we to look for the solution of the whole difficulty that besets those not too easily synthesised relations of Christ to God, and indirectly of Christ to man?

Questions innumerable arise and press for an answer, but at the basis of all the same fundamental problem lies concealed; What is the relation of Christ to the Absolute God, and therefore to man also? Questions such as, 'Is perfect immanence of God in Christ, the ideal Man, a sufficient account of the Incarnation?' 'In what sense was God immanent in Jesus?' 'Is it metaphysical or only moral and spiritual immanence?' If God was thus immanent, 'How was it related to His personality?' 'Was it the Divine Logos or the Divine beyond measure?' 'All the fulness of the Godhead bodily' or 'one in Whom the Spirit dwelt ὡς ἐν οὐδενὶ ἄλλῳ?' All these are but queries to the ultimate question of the relationship between Jesus Christ as Incarnate and God Absolute, 'the Father.' A full answer to any of them would imply a complete knowledge of the nature of the Trinity, of the nature and necessity of Incarnation at all, and of the history, past, present and future, of 'personality.' To such knowledge we cannot pretend. A partial and inadequate answer, therefore, will be all that it is in our power to give, for in all ultimate problems 'the clouds' compel us to take refuge in an incompleteness which will always remain paradoxical to the lower reason. The nature of our subject is such that only the understanding when informed by the higher 'Reason,' only the *νοῦς* speaking through the mediation of *διάνοια*, only faith transcending the limitations of speech, can fully comprehend.

Approaching the Person of Christ, then, along the lines of an immanental interpretation, can we arrive at any satisfactory explanation of the Incarnation as this has always been conceived by the spiritual consciousness? And if we ultimately discover the inadequacy of the doctrine of immanence to account for Jesus Christ, in what respects may it be of use in leading us to a due appreciation of that transcendent act of Incarnation, that most real act of God, that act which it cannot explain, although it might, by anticipation, prepare us to receive in all its fulness?

Dr Tennant sees in the conception of immanence an ambiguity and vagueness, even in its physical associations, and in its application to the relation of God to a person it requires careful scrutiny. He tells us that it was employed to express the *active* relation of God to the world after science had abolished the Deistic conception. What, he asks, is maintained by the assertion of the immanence of God in the world? Is it synonymous with recreation which Augustine imagined and Descartes taught? Is it the denial of secondary causes and the absolute sovereignty of God? "Does it exclude secondary causation from the physical realm; if not, where draw the line between deism placing divine causation at the beginning, and immanentism replacing all 'occasional' and 'efficient' causes by the direct creative act of God?"[1] In a former part of this work we maintained that creation is neither identifiable with, nor in absolute separation from, God; but the relation is expressed by the term 'immanence,' for that is the relation of God to everything outside of, or other than, God. By immanence we signify the maintenance of a thing or person in being, as well as the constitution of that thing or person in being; not that God *is* that thing or person, for that is pantheism; nor that He is completely other than it, for then we have two Absolutes; but that He is all that it is, while it is not all that He is; He fully and absolutely comprehends, embraces, and encircles it, and it has its life, its existence, solely and only in and through and by His life, His existence. Perhaps the distinction of final and efficient causes is best approached

[1] F. R. Tennant, "The Present Condition of Some Fundamental Christian Doctrines," *Constructive Quarterly*, 1920.

by regarding the 'final' cause as an *ultimate* relation of an effect to God, the efficient as a relative relation of the effect to a law or principle; the one is immediate the other mediated through nature. The distinction is not ontological and essential, but scientific and relative, for, as Hegel says, every end is itself a means, and every means itself an end; the means is no more the means to the end, than from another point of view, the end is the means to the means; the end itself, therefore, has an internal dialectic within itself, returning to itself through itself.

Now, Dr Tennant continues, the usual synonyms of immanence are 'inhabits,' 'pervades,' 'informs,' which he regards as equally vague. "Immanence as indwelling in a person, is an ethical relation, grounded in moral affinity, respecting and not overriding human freedom and responsibility, a relation of intimacy but not of obliteration. It partakes of the nature of inspiration, suggestion, stimulus."[1] He maintains that it is *less* than human rationality, divine illumination, or human conscience, the Voice of God in us. It is something less than that the divine and the human minds, in willing the same objects, cease to be two minds and become one. But it involves *rapport*. Divine immanence in a person may be *less* than reason, inspiration or conscience, but it is, nevertheless, the ground of the possibility of all of these. Because God 'indwells' in persons by His immanental activity they possess criterions of the true, the divine, and the good; each reflects an attribute of God in Whom each finds and realises its supreme prototype; and the pursuit of either the true, the divine, or the good, will lead to transcendent reality in which immanent reality has its being, its life and its eternal home.

But continuing our train of thought up to Christ, the Supreme Person, he says: "By unique sinlessness and sympathy He offered no restraint to the influx of divine influences, hence His insight into moral and spiritual truth, and of God."[2] At this point we are confronted with the paradox which a doctrine of immanence cannot solve, and which may fitly be called the 'crux of immanence.' Looked at from below, that is, from the conclusion of immanentism, we are left with no interpretation

[1, 2] F. R. Tennant, *op. cit.*

of Jesus Christ as the Incarnate Son of God, as the 'Word became Flesh'; and from above there appears to be a breach of continuity between Him and all other men. Immanence cannot inform us how He was divine, ontologically God; and Incarnation as usually conceived, cannot specify in what way He was in all respects like unto us. "Has immanence made it plain whether our Lord's moral sympathy and purity are to be regarded as the cause, the condition, of the fulness of divine immanence in Him, or as the effects or consequences of the indwelling, the suggestion, of God in Him. On the former view we have still to account for this sinlessness and religious intensity; and the divine subject has to be abandoned for a purely humanitarian explanation. If the latter view is adopted then how account for God's immanence in Christ being so different in degree from His indwelling in mankind generally so as to suggest a strong difference in kind? The theory of immanence does not serve to explain the uniqueness of the Person of Christ. It serves to explain only the continuity of revelation and its progressiveness up to Christ, but *not* His Person."[1]

According to the general law that the higher must always explain the lower, and not the lower the higher, Incarnation, which synthesises immanence and transcendence, must interpret immanence, and not immanence Incarnation. The difficulty in discerning the *uniqueness* of Christ is not solved by the admission of something unique and original in every individual. We may follow the nerve of the argument contained in Lotze's description of the origination of the soul, but we still have the problem on our hands; "the soul originates neither in the body nor in nothing; it goes forth from the substance of the Infinite with no less fulness of reality than all nature brought forth from the same source; and neither do the soul and body come together by chance, nor is the work of the body by its organization to make itself a soul corresponding to the soul of its vital activity; nor does the infinite arbitrarily distribute ready-fashioned minds to infant germs. But as with free consistency it makes every bodily organism the necessary result of the parent organism,

[1] F. R. Tennant, *op. cit.*

so also in the creation of souls it doubtless follows a self-imposed law that weaves their succeeding generations into the gradations of an inherent affinity."

The writer proceeds with his main thesis, disallowing any interpretation of the Incarnation upon these lines. "If supernatural activities only differ from natural by immediateness, *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*, then every soul is a subject of a supernatural event. How account for Christ's uniqueness on this humanitarian view as to His ontological status? This uninherited genius, innate, must give Him His spiritual and moral insight. But although this evades some of the difficulties of the divine subject and immanence theories, facts must be clipped to fit it."[1]

The problem is there, however unable we may be to find a solution to it; and no belittling of the philosophy of the Incarnation can alter the fact of the Jesus of history and the consequences of that fact; nor can any explanation of His Person explain away the identity of that Historic Figure with the metaphysic of the Word. "Fact is fact and continues in one stay and 'its years shall not fail,' though its conceptional garments need to be replaced from generation to generation. Christian theology is being built at present upon other foundations than historical fact or metaphysics, *e.g.* on value-judgments and present individual religious experience. But facts are stubborn things and metaphysic of *some* sort is necessarily implied in every attempt to get rid of metaphysic of other sorts. It is not by subjectivism or reliance on moral consciousness, that the theology and metaphysic implied in the Sermon on the Mount and the Lord's Prayer will receive their objective justification. The self-consciousness of Jesus is by no means resolved by a critical investigation into a fictitious invention; and fact is none the less fact for the inability of our forthcoming concepts to comprehend it."[2] Such a warning as this not to shelve the inevitable difficulties of making comprehensible to reason the facts of faith is all-important; and our inability to arrive at any precise and definite conclusion respecting the relation between immanence

[1, 2] F. R. Tennant, *op. cit.*

and Incarnation must be no reason for an alteration of the essential data of the problem into something against which all experience revolts; in these matters there is more wisdom than is apparent in Watson's words: "they see not clearliest who see all things clear."

Now the doctrine of immanence, if pressed into domains beyond its proper province, falls into error, but kept within that province is a most advantageous approach to the doctrine of Incarnation. In the first place Christ's humanity is constantly kept in view; inasmuch as immanence sees Him as the culmination of an ethical and spiritual world-process, One in Whom the Spirit, always present in the world, has at last come to appearance and manifestation in a personal form. It cannot allow any breach of the law of continuity between Him and all other men, nor between them both and the physical realm of nature; for one and all they are revelations of the immanental operation of a single Absolute Being, to Whom all aspire, and in Whom all have their being and life. Secondly, and as a corollary from this continuity, the Incarnation is seen to be the fulfilment of God's original purpose for the world. God and man are not inherently and in their essential nature different; Christ can, therefore, be the connecting bond between them, since He alone stands at the summit of the evolutionary process; in seeing Him man learns to see God, because he learns to see his own true nature as originally conceived by God, and now realised and revealed in Christ. "The past and future of the race in its relation to God meet in the Incarnation." "It seems to us that only as the culmination of an ethical process—one, indeed, with the world process—can the ethical and spiritual God become incarnate in humanity; or enter the world as He does in Jesus; and only in the unity of that perfect indwelling of God in Christ can the race discover the source and strength of ethical renewal in which man may realise that God dwelleth in him and he in God."[1]

"We are made complete in Him. What He did no one can any more undo." This is not to deny that throughout the world's

[1] F. Platt, *op. cit.*

evolution up to Christ the Logos was not the basis and presupposition of the development, but that, at the 'culmination of an ethical process,' the world entered upon a new era which involved a new kingdom of relationships with God. Immanence, of whatever kind, was always through the Logos of God, for it was the immanence of the Logos; but whereas, prior to Incarnation, God's immanence in the world was the immanence of Logos, after Incarnation He was immanent through Jesus Christ as Logos. The absence of an absolute revelation of God forbids a knowledge of the nature of the Absolute Revealer, through Whom all revelation had been effected, and without such a knowledge God was not, nor could be, known as He is essentially. The immanence of God in man was always through Logos, but now He can be immanent through Logos Incarnate, or Incarnate Logos; but this is not to make Him Incarnate in man through the Spirit. If the doctrine of immanence is unable to explain His presence in Spirit to spiritual consciousness, which is the consequence of Incarnation, it is totally unable to explain the cause of that consequence, namely, the Incarnation itself. Because the Spirit, even as it is present and operative in our spirit, contains a *transcendent* moment within it, immanence *per se* cannot comprehend it, although it is complementary to and implied in all immanence; *à fortiori* it is unable to comprehend the Logos Incarnate, as being a *divine* thing, at once the cause and condition of the presence of the Spirit. Incarnation implies both transcendence and immanence, but can be fully interpreted by neither; it implies transcendence, for without it we should have no means of judging whether Incarnation had taken place; while without immanence there would be no criterion by which to judge whether it were true or not. Incarnation is the great without calling to the great within, deep must speak to deep. A doctrine of the *pure* transcendence of God is as unable to admit an Incarnation as is a doctrine of *pure* immanence; in the former case He is too completely removed from the world, in the latter He is lost in the evolutionary process; in this second case either there is no Incarnation or nothing but an Incarnation. We have observed elsewhere how

the conception of Incarnation becomes undermined by a too exclusive emphasis upon immanence. On the one hand Jesus Christ is interpreted as being but the highest product of the impersonal process in the world, in which the divine immanence rises to higher and higher forms of manifestation, as the organ through which He reveals Himself becomes more and more susceptible and receptive of His Presence; on the other we lapse into the Hegelian view of universal incarnation, as the truth of an unique and special one in a single historic instance. Both of these theories are far removed from the true doctrine of the Incarnation as understood by Christianity. To the former immanental view of His Person it would respond that Incarnation was rather the transcendent act of a Living God than the culmination of an impersonal process, although in being such an act it is the culmination of the process. To the latter view of universal incarnation it would reply that Incarnation is central, not secondary; essential, not symbolic; absolute, not relative. So far is it from being of subordinate significance, and symbolic of the metaphysical unity between God and man, that it alone can render that unity actual, it alone is the condition of the personal immanence, through the Spirit, of God in the world. Christ is not representative of hypostatised humanity or the hypostatised world-process, but its supreme goal, as well as its supreme way and means towards the goal; He will not vanish on its being glorified, but, on the contrary, it will only be glorified as it abides in Him.

Now if immanence is insufficient to explain Incarnation, it may, nevertheless, be of inestimable value in acting as our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. To follow the path traced for us by the history of divine immanence in creation is to be conducted to the threshold of the Incarnate Person, even if to cross it would be to trespass into a realm that lies outside and above the scope of immanence. Let us now consider the manner in which God was present and active in His work of creation prior to His Personal advent in the Incarnation; and let the term 'immanence' be employed to denote, without specification, this '*manner*' of His relation to the world.

Throughout the whole course of nature and throughout the whole history of man, God was, by His power, His life, and energy in the system, gradually raising the created to union with Himself, by preparing it to receive the absolute revelation of Himself within it as a Personal Presence. In what sense then, we may ask, was He thus present by His operation in it, conforming it to His own likeness, and fitting it to be worthy of the advent of an Incarnate Person, according to His ultimate design and purpose in creation?

Bearing in mind that the oft-repeated phrase 'impersonal immanence' is in danger of misleading us, perhaps it is truer to say that the relation of God to the world was always a *personal* relation, for He cannot act below the *personal* level; yet it was not such a personal relation as we beheld in Jesus Christ, nor one that resembles the relation between the Spirit and the spirit of man, as an extension of the Incarnation in the world. It is because all abstractions from the one concrete *personality* of God have their being only within and as integral factors of that personality, that we are entitled to deny any presence of energy, reason, will, goodness, purpose or love, as other than a *personal* presence of God under diverse forms; each possesses a meaning solely through personality, and each derives its existence through the living unity infused into it by personality. For this reason we may readily admit the truth expressed in words of W. L. Walker, while we resent the mode of expression, as implying more than seems necessary, a breach of continuity between God's working prior to Incarnation and His working through the Incarnate life. "If the Divine working has now a *personal* element in it, this implies that prior to Incarnation the presence of the Spirit in man was only in impersonal form; and the whole phenomena of pre-Christian religion, both inside and outside the field of the Scriptures, point to this conclusion."[1] He will admit the immanence of the Divine Reason and Power, but not of the Divine Personality. There is a sense, however, in which we may say 'no personality, no reason; no personality, no power.' W. Temple makes a distinction of importance by allowing God

[1] W. L. Walker, *The Spirit and the Incarnation.*

to be Personally in the world, though not as a Person: "What 'indwells' in the physical universe is not a *Person* though it may be Personal, *i.e.* the *activity* of a Person. It must be a principle; it is It and not He. I might be devoted to It but not love or pray to It." And he continues, we must begin with the Logos, but go on to the Father. Purpose presupposes Will; we may have an immanent Purpose but not 'an immanent Will.' Shakespeare's thoughts and feelings are immanent in his plays—not Shakespeare thinking and feeling.

"If we declare that this world-principle is only *fully* revealed in a Person, we shall at once be involved in the belief that it is something more than could ever be immanent in its fulness in the physical world."[1] We may readily agree that God cannot be even Personally immanent in the universe if this is taken to mean immanence at a personal level, for this would imply a receptivity for such an indwelling; but by personal immanence we understand immanence, in whatever low a degree, which is always the immanence of a Person, and not of any ultimate principle, law, or purpose as held in separation from the Reason, Operation or Will, from which the principle, law or purpose respectively proceed. The distinction is vital between immanence as Personal and immanent as a Person, since the latter is what we mean by Incarnation, where God dwells as God within the immanental process, the transcendent Cause and creative Agent Himself becoming subject to the relative conditions of finite existence. This same difficulty, due to confusion of terminology, has been the cause of much misunderstanding; although in the instance of Dr L. P. Jacks' criticism of W. R. Inge's statement that no diffused impersonal revelation would take the place of the Word made flesh and tabernacling among us, we believe that the *central* position of the Person of Christ, as maintained in all sound Christology, is overlooked by the critic. "Why impersonal?" he asks. "Are we to treat as 'impersonal' every revelation which is not embodied in *one particular historical Person*? Must we say that the writer of the Twenty-Third Psalm, who addresses God as the Good Shepherd, or Rabin-

[1] W. Temple, "The Divinity of Christ," in *Foundations*.

dranath Tagore, who represents Him as Love, were dependent on impersonal revelation simply because the evidence before them was not derived from the particular Person Dean Inge has in mind?"[1] If, he says, the doctrine of the 'spark of the divine essence at the core of personality' is true, for such is the Dean's maintenance, then "we may surely expect to find more than one of such tabernacles standing and shining on the vast fields of the world's history."[2] But the gulf between all other 'tabernacles' and Jesus Christ is so immense and of such a different order, that they are incomparable with *His* revelation of God. Through Him came an entirely new relationship of humanity with God, whereby He was able to alter essentially the whole *interior condition* of man, making him altogether a 'new creature.' Such a spiritual renewal no other revelation or manifestation of God in any unique personality has either accomplished or even professed to accomplish, for no other person has claimed an equality with God, nor demanded the absolute allegiance that Christ claimed from His followers. But such a claim and such a demand justify the predication of His essential *Godhead*, for only so can He stand in the universal and consummating relation to the race in which He stands in fact. "Up till the Incarnation God as Son was immanent in the world as its Idea, but not as yet personally present in its life. But in Christ He thus really entered into a new transcendent relation to the world, and can be in Him the 'quickening Spirit' and personal Saviour of men brought into contact with Him through faith. In Christ the immanent Divinity returns into unity with the transcendent Deity."[3] The Christian conception of Incarnation, by its identification of Christ with the eternal Logos of the Father, has for ever exalted Him above all past and all future revelations. Through Him all previous revealers of God received their inspiration, illumination and knowledge; and through Him, as now mediated by Incarnation, all subsequent revealers of God will derive their Godlikeness. God as Logos has been immanent in the world always; but the Logos, His Self-utterance, His objectivity to Himself in His inmost Life, finds a permanent

[1, 2] *Hibbert Journal*, January 1923. [3] W. L. Walker, *op. cit.*

expression in the further self-utterance in creation, which directly reflects Him, and which is ultimately destined to behold Him in His fulness as its eternal ground and final goal. "As the thought of the Divine Mind is called the Word Who is the Son, so the unfolding of that thought in external action is named the word of the Word." In Himself He abides for ever at the Father's side, yet He moves all things, sustains and permeates all things, and is the Revealer and the Revealed in all revelation. Himself as eternal Logos, He is unmoved; yet 'all motion's Source' by His immanental operation as the dynamic life and ideal of all things. But if He is the indwelling and inspiring Divine life and reason in and behind and above all things, then in Incarnation we behold no alien intrusion into the world-process, no breach of His normal mode of activity in relation to the material and moral creation, no supernatural intervention *ab extra* upon a closed and completed system. On the contrary, Incarnation becomes the natural climax of the whole long preparation anticipated by the presence of God as Logos within it; it is seen to be the one 'far-off divine event' adumbrated by all finite evolution as such, and the manifestation of the Self-imparting and Self-revealing God as a direct and immediate Personal Presence. "If it is really *God* that is immanent in the creation as its idea and cause, must not God necessarily come out in the consummation, as He has sought to realise His being in the world? Fidelity to the Divine immanence in the world leads of necessity to the Incarnation as the culmination of the whole process of the world's development."[1] "The Logos which became flesh is the complete self-manifestation and self-impartation of the immanent God." Now as the immanence of God as Logos in the world was the immanence of a transcendent thing in itself, that is, the immanence of a Transcendent Person, the consummation of such an immanental development must contain both the immanent and transcendent factors within it. Incarnation, which is the synthesis of transcendence and immanence, can fitly constitute such a consummation, for it was, from above, the transcendent act of a Transcendent Being;

[1] W. L. Walker, *op. cit.*

and from below, the end to which the whole immanental process pointed. To keep clearly in view the *complementary* character of transcendence and immanence is to refrain from interpreting Incarnation, either as *only* a Transcendent act of God, or as *only* the conclusion of a developing and increasing world-purpose; if it cannot be both we see quite well that it can be neither, without resigning the interpenetrative natures of transcendence and immanence, and falling back into some kind of deism or pantheism. But elsewhere it has been our contention that the presence of the Spirit in spiritual consciousness, being the extension of the Incarnation in the world, also contains those two moments of transcendence and immanence. The entirely new thing that made its entrance into mankind after the Incarnation was incomprehensible to all prior Incarnational revelation, and transcended all categories by which it could receive an interpretation. What then, we may ask, differentiates the spiritual Presence of God, through Christ, in believers, and His Presence *in Persona* in Christ Himself? In neither case can the philosophical terms 'immanence' and 'transcendence,' themselves but abstractions from the one concrete real, suffice to exhaust the full significance of His relationship, because we are moving upon a spiritual level above the order of antithesis.

Now St Athanasius says concerning the purpose of the Incarnation, "*αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπησεν ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν.*" "He does not mean that man's growth into Godlikeness will result in his absorption into the pleroma of the Godhead." This is a method of expressing the inclusive and central relationship of Christ to every man. In God is included that of which every human life is but an imperfect copy and image; and "it is exactly in proportion as the personal self of each man is brought into union with that Divinely-human life that in the realm of the superconscious the 'ego' finds its true destiny in becoming humanly Divine."[1] Divine likeness is not identity, and to be divinely-human is not to be humanly divine. Man is human and in the gradual process of being converted into perfect Godlikeness through Christ; but Christ is divine from the first,

[1] J. H. B. Masterman, *The Incarnation.* (Three lectures.)

becoming human in the fulness of the times. "If the Divine and human are never confused in Christ, neither are they in us"; there is no absorption of the human *in* the divine, but a spiritual union of the human *with* the divine, which alone renders the human truly human.

Humanity is completely and absolutely in divinity, but not divinity in humanity; Christ's humanity was fully realised in His Deity, but not the Deity in His Humanity, as Incarnate. "The Incarnate was not exhausted in the Incarnation." "The human is all-Divine, but the Divine is not all-human, but superhuman. Deity is not only Deity in humanity however truly wonderful this may be of both." Again, "The Divine that touches our lives on their frontier overflowed and filled His whole nature, so that in Him neither the human nor the Divine had any longer any independent existence. The Divine became human, the human became Divine. But while the whole of the human was taken into God, the whole of the Divine was not taken into humanity."[1] In spite of the extremes into which Christology has fallen, extremes that border upon transcendentalism on the one hand, immanentism and pantheism on the other, a sound Christology will be panentheistic, and a sound Theology no less so. By panentheism both the divinity and humanity are preserved; but while the former remains transcendent and absolute, the latter becomes what it ought to be only by its immanence in the divine; the divine is what it is and completely realises itself in itself, the human acquires its perfection and develops its nature only by realising itself in the divine. The human and divine are never in absolute separation, but in closest unity; they are never in absolute identity, but in spiritual union; they abide 'in' each other by mutual reciprocal intimacy. All mysticisms that are not at bottom philosophically panentheistic—that is, if they do not recognise the *distinction*, always present yet unconscious, between transcendence and immanence, divine and human, Spirit and spirit—fall short of the *Christian* mystical consciousness. The philosophy of the Absolute and SOME Absolutist philosophies recognise the inadequacy of all

[1] J. H. B. Masterman, *op. cit.*

logical categories to express the ultimate relation between the world and God, the finite and the Absolute; but as the categories of difference and identity are logical, and those of immanence and transcendence, philosophical, they are unable to describe the highest truths. The relation of divine and human is fundamentally a spiritual and mystical relation, and in such cases the appeal to direct apprehension is alone possible; only he who has *experienced* the relation can be said to know it, for all mediation has collapsed into immediacy.

The human is never the divine, not even in its fully perfect condition, and thus God is not, nor can be, incarnate in a man; He is in him by ideal and aspiration, He indwells by the immanent operation of the Spirit. "In Christ we see One in whom the life of the Spirit, towards which God was raising man all throughout His previous working in the world, reached its culmination and realised its end; in whom, on the one hand, the fulness of man's life as a son of God entered the world, and on the other hand, the Spirit of God completely expressed itself in a human form, which, as a Divine-human Personality, must abide for ever."[1] "In Christ, God as Son, we have the highest manifestation and personal presence of the Father Himself. The Father, in short, near us even as the Infinite Spirit 'in whom we live and move and have our being,' was all throughout the life of Jesus giving us His Spirit or Himself in His Son. So that in Christ we have, not a *different* person from God, but God Himself as He has expressed His Life in highest form in our world, and as He has given us Himself as a person at once Divine and human."[2] In incarnation we have, not an instance of the maximum revelation of God through humanity, but a Person in Whom a divine Person is incarnate. Even here we must guard against the danger of there being two Persons, a human *and* divine, since the human had no real hypostasis before assumption by the Logos; but, holding to the truth of enhypostasia, we should see in the One Person of Christ a Divine Person under human form, an Absolute Person under finite limitations, a progressive divine immanence in the world and in man cul-

[1, 2] W. L. Walker, *op. cit.*

minating in a transcendent divine operation. "While the Spirit of God, so far, 'immanently' within us all, and with us all transcendently as the Eternal Truth and Love of which all may partake, this Spirit was so immanently in Christ as to give in His life a 'transcendent' manifestation of God, and be for us the abiding presence of the Spirit at once immanent and transcendent."[1] God was so Personally present *in* the Life of Christ that His life was God's Life, His suffering God's suffering, His existence God's existence in Him. If all dualism requires mediation to bridge the distinction between the persons, One Who is Himself that mediation needs no intermediate terms either to join Him to God or to man; unless He can be *both* God and man, or God in, through and *as* Man, He cannot act as the absolute Revealer of God and man, for an Absolute Revealer must *be* what He reveals. Without the synthesis of the two natures, Incarnation is still an unsolved mystery; and without the admission of the presence of *Transcendent* Being in Incarnation, hypostatised *humanity* leaves us with no *absolute* revelation of the nature of God. No interpretation of the Person of Jesus Christ can be adequate unless these two essential factors in His Life receive their full and complete recognition; and the presence of these two factors eternally differentiates *Him* from *His*. His real humanity acted as a limitation of His divinity. This, however, must not be substituted for Kenosis, but regarded as a consequence of that Kenosis. That He was in the Father and the Father in Him must not replace but be the result of the Word becoming Flesh, and the assumptions entailed in that 'becoming.' Such a view will forbid us to speak loosely of an *incarnation* of God in man in so far as he is receptive of the Spirit, or to identify divinity with perfect humanity, or complete receptivity. The word 'Incarnation' will be reserved for that unique and absolute revelation of God, God Himself in Christ, whereby the Spirit eternally in Him is mediated now and for ever to those who are fitted to *receive* Him. If the Incarnation is the advent of a pre-existent Being into the realm of space and time, it is marked as distinct, "not in degree, but in kind,

[1] W. L. Walker, *op. cit.*

from the highest conceivable form of inspiration of the human by the Divine, or of Immanence of the Divine in the human, such as we know in the case of man in his relationship to his Maker. In the Person of Christ the union of Divine and human was ontological and essential." No degree of the immanence of God in man, to whatever intensity this may be raised, no degree of the presence of the Spirit as mediated through Christ in the believer, to whatever intimacy this may obtain, can even approximate to what we mean by Incarnation. Our ignorance of the true nature of personality forbids us from dogmatising upon the ultimate relation of the divine and human spirits; but since the human can only be consummated in the divine, the immanent in the transcendent, Incarnation, which is the climax of God's eternal law of Self-impartation and Self-manifestation, must introduce a new factor into the previous immanental process in the world. If we now maintain that in Incarnation the Personality is that of the Logos or Word, this is not to deny that it is a genuinely *human* Person still; on the contrary, perfect human personality alone exists in the Logos, and all other personality only attains perfection in proportion to its likeness to its prototype in the Word. The Person of the Logos, Himself an Infinite Person, performed the normal human activities in Christ that are usually performed by the human personality. If such substitution would have been impossible by a finite person, this is not necessarily the case with an infinite Person; if the former substitution would have resulted in a *loss* of personality, the latter may indicate a perfection of personality. Again, it is to be remembered that in Incarnation the Personality of the Word did not join itself to a created personality; but the human nature became hypostatic by its union with the Divine Personality which gave it a real existence. There is "no history of Christ's humanity before it became divine. It started by being supported in existence by the Personality of the Word." Substitution of human personality by the personality of the Word is Hypostatic Union. There are no limits to the Holy Spirit's elevation of a rational creature to similarity with God. But sanctifying grace raised to its millionth power could *never* be Hypostatic Union.

This is of a different order, though not so different as not to be found in the same rational being, as not to have certain secret affinities with it. In Hypostatic Union the Second Person of the Trinity takes the place of the created element.[1] But the matter may be pressed further than this without relinquishing the essential distinction between Christ and all other men, between Incarnation and Supreme spiritual immanence, between divine and human. The writer quoted above proceeds to make the following interesting remarks upon the implications of Hypostatic Union: "There seems to be no inherent contradiction in the supposition that a living grown up human being might be united with a divine person hypostatically at a given moment by Divine Personality. But such a union would differ in many things from the Hypostatic Union that is in Christ. The greatest difference, a difference which perhaps would constitute an infinite difference would be this, that in such a supposition the human nature would not be divine by the very laws of its conception and birth. To *become* God is totally different —is there a contradiction? Whereas the former would owe endless gratitude to God for Hypostatic Union, yet in Christ, His humanity does not. It has divine Personality, divine existence through laws of its birth. 'Propter proprietates Nativitatis ipsius.'"[2] "Hypostatic Union necessarily means to raise up an individual human being to such a height as to make it capable of doing the work of human redemption and sanctification."[3] Christianity demands more than uniqueness, more than finality, more than a supreme God-filled and God-inspired man, as its Founder; its claim for Christ must be none other than *Absolute*, and Hypostatic Union alone guarantees such an absoluteness. Without unduly widening the gulf that must always exist between Him and us, we see how no doctrine of immanence, which tends to assert only a difference in degree, is sufficient to account for this *à priori* difference of Christ from all other finite beings. Because Incarnation contains an entirely *new* revelation of God to man, it implies an entirely *new* relation of the Revealer to God, a relation inexplicable by all prior

[1, 2, 3] See A. Vonier, *The Personality of Christ*.

relations of man to God. Instead of the 'impersonal' diffused revelation that the term 'immanence' conveys, we have a personal particular revelation in a Personal particular historic Person. Incarnation, in contrast to immanence, implies a manifestation of God *here* not *there*, it is bound up with the spatial and temporal limitations of all finite existence. But the greater the Kenosis of God the greater the Plerosis, the greater the self-limitation, the greater the absoluteness. "If the Creator could not become immanent in Creation His infinity would have been curtailed by all the powers and dimensions of space. And if immanence could not pass by a new act into incarnation then God would have been lost in His world, and the world lost to God."[1] "Immanence cannot explain Incarnation, which is a new departure of more moral nature. The incarnation is not God's identity with the world prolonged, but a new self-identification, which is yet older than the world."[2] In a sense, therefore, all immanence is henceforth through Incarnation, it must refer to the historic 'Word'; it culminates in Christ "in Whom it for the first time reaches perfection in permanent and satisfying forms which are prophetic and typical of its universal recognition." "What has been realised in Him is not simply more than the past, measured backward from His advent; it is likewise more than all the future; for through Him is mediated now and for ever the union with God which is salvation and blessedness."[3] Christ is central and supreme for the race; and in consequence, by baptism into His Spirit and by drawing near to His likeness, man draws near to his fellow man because He is the common centre of all. Each man may see Him in himself and in himself see Him, for man's abiding in Him is reciprocal and correlative of His abiding in man. John Smith's remark, still profoundly true, that "such as men themselves are such will God appear to them to be," contains the important truth that all supernatural revelation is necessarily limited by the medium through which that revelation is received; but this is not to deny the possibility of an *Absolute* revelation to man. The macrocosm and the

[1, 2] P. T. Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ.*
[3] H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ.*

microcosm can each be a true mirror of the other, while both can be a mirror of God, Who is the ground of each, by reproducing a faithful portrait of their Original. Theomorphism does not shut God out, nor does anthropomorphism shut man in, because anthropology is only completed through Christology in Theology; while Theology only finds an expression in anthropology. Incarnation revealed the true nature of the divine in man, and in revealing it radically altered that nature, for it inaugurated a new era in the history of man's relation to God. Through the Incarnational fulfilment of the immanental divine working in nature and in man we may "see all creation and history in the light of a single spiritual conception, which represents the intramundane self-fulfilment of a personal originative principle interior to the being of God Himself." The Incarnation is thus "the transcendent fulfilment of the possibilities contained in the Divine immanence in mankind."[1] Professor Mackintosh prefers to take, as our point of departure in a discussion of the relation of immanence to Incarnation, the conception of the immanence of God in Christ rather than the divine permeation of the universe as a whole. He finds the interpretation of the typical in Christ by the historic in the world less significant and illuminating than the reverse procedure of interpreting the historic by the typical. Henceforth immanence is incarnational, or is mediated, not by God as Logos, but by God as Incarnate Logos or Logos in manhood. Immanence in mankind is now the extension of immanence in Christ rather than the immanence in Christ being the climax of immanence in mankind. Since He is the supreme fulfilment of all pre-incarnational revelation of God, revealing God as self-imparting, immanence must be viewed in the light of the transcendent, the relative in the light of the absolute, and the material and corporeal in the light of the spiritual. Immanence is appropriate to conceive the unity of Creation and the continuity in Creation, but it is wholly inadequate to express the principle of the communion of God and man, rendered possible by mediation of Jesus Christ. The full truth as manifested in the Incarnation

[1] F. Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought*.

becomes obscured unless this 'newness,' this absolute relation between God and man is allowed to shine by its own divine light. It is not primarily that Christ is divine *because* He is the purest and completest revelation of God, nor *because* in Him "the universal spirit of humanity has found fullest expression"; but He is divine and *therefore* He is perfect God and perfect man. Neither transcendence nor immanence can account for divinity, but both these follow from the presence of a divine Person. Now if categories of too earthly an origin are insufficient to interpret Incarnation from the standpoint of Deity, our ignorance equally precludes us from any precise determination of the conditions, in the abyss of the divine nature, that must precede such a transcendent act. All that seems possible for the finite understanding to assert is that the voluntary self-identification with Humanity, which Incarnation involves, must be part of His self-utterance as Absolute God. To the last the ways of God with men will remain a mystery, a mystery which it will be our wisdom to recognise and to revere; but faith, and ultimately Love, is itself a mystery; for it is the human counterpart of the divine mystery of revelation, which in its highest form and supreme instance is the Incarnation, or God Himself in the form of Man.

> The very God! think, Abib; dost thou think?
> So, the All-Great, were the All-Loving too—
> So, through the thunder comes a human voice
> Saying, "O heart I made, a heart beats here!
> Face, My hands fashioned, see it in Myself.
> Thou hast no power nor mayst conceive of Mine,
> But love I gave thee, with Myself to love,
> And thou must love Me who have died for thee!"[1]

Before we pass to a brief examination of the Person of Christ, based no longer upon the ground of doctrine, philosophy, or pure thought, but on that of the extant *historical* narratives of His life and works, we may summarise our central conclusion regarding the relation of immanence to Incarnation, of man to Christ, by following the path indicated in some words of

[1] R. Browning, *Ep. of Karshish.*

Dr Forsyth's work, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*. The humanistic interpretation of the gospel Figure will never exhaust the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. Transcendent reality can never be embraced by immanent reality, itself but a factor or hypostasis within it; nor can objective being fall wholly within subjective being. The Christ within the soul that forms the subjective counterpart of the Christ within the heavens, identically one with the Christ once upon earth, is not "a mystic subjectivity but an objective truth acting upon us at closest quarters as a finer, fuller soul in soul."[1] He was identical with us in principle, but solitary in achievement, for He 'died to self' always and 'died to sin' once. "Man has *affinity* of nature but not identity of personal life" with Him; 'He possesses prerogatives which are no part of human excellence.' 'He is *something more* than ideal man.' In Christ we behold One Who submitted to the laws of His own making and to the principles of His own Being, He moved to a perfection through a perfection; for He did not acquire Godhead *ab extra*, but realised the inherent Divinity from *within* His own Nature; for Him progress was always immanent in His own Being, the ultimate nature of Whose Deity remained unaltered by the movement implied in Kenosis. "In Christ we have the whole perfect action of Godhead concentrated through one factor or hypostasis within it. He moved by His history *to* a supernal world that He moved *in* by His nature." "Christ's growth was one *in* what He was, and not simply *to* what He might be." It was not a case of acquiring what He had not, but appropriating and realising what He had; He did not acquire but unfolded Deity. His mission and consummate revelation to men was not to "show man God's Love, but *be* to them God's Love, not to preach God but *be* God to them."[2]

Such a distinction as here maintained between Christ and man is vital and essential, being a necessary postulate of faith and spiritual experience. It is the explicit denial of any *identity* between Godhead and manhood, divinity and humanity, but it is also the primary presupposition of their mutual relation-

[1, 2] P. T. Forsyth, *op. cit.*

ship and interpenetrative natures. That Christ is Saviour is the *condition* of man's salvation, that He is Redeemer is the *condition* of his redemption. Not because the Incarnate is either in absolute separation or in absolute identity with man, but because He is "God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God" is His transcendence the condition of our immanence in Him, His divinity the condition of our perfect humanity, His purity of our purification, His holiness of our sanctification, His blessedness of our beatitude, His fulness of our fulfilment in Him, His Godhead of our immortality.

> We feel we are nothing—for all is Thou and in Thee;
> We feel we are something—*that* also has come from Thee;
> We know we are nothing—but Thou wilt help us to be.

We conclude our whole treatment of the central problem of the essay by a comparison of the result here reached with the presentation of the historic life of Jesus Christ in the Gospels. It is our belief that substantially the same conclusions are endorsed in both instances, the Christ of Christology being identical with the Christ of history, the Lord of spiritual experience speaking in tones of Jesus of Nazareth.

"Immanence in the New Testament is not an abstract doctrine, nor the conclusion of an argument, nor a poetic fancy, nor a mystic intuition, but an immediate experience."[1] "Christ consummates immanence in nature, conscience and reason, for in Him were all things created, in the heavens...all things have been created through Him and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist."[2] "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." This is no absorption of the human personality in the divine personality; communion with God through 'abiding' in Christ depends, not upon absorption nor upon unity, but upon union, involving likeness, resemblance, kinship with the divine. "This conception practically carries with it the elements which a modern doctrine of Immanence is designed to conserve—the essential

[1, 2] F. Platt, *op. cit.*

affinity of man to God, the sacredness and worth of the present life, and the nearness of God to man in moral and spiritual experience."[1] Immanence in the Gospels is not a reasoned and philosophical theory, it is no abstract relation tentatively put forward as a possible relation between God and man; but in the direct and immediate contact of the Divine Presence in the Incarnate Person with those among whom He moved there is a fellowship, an intimacy, a communion of Spirit with spirit, which such a cold philosophical term as immanence is wholly inadequate to describe. The deeper we penetrate into the mysteries of the Christ, the more we come to a fuller knowledge of the heart of God, the more we 'learn' of Him the things of the Spirit, the truer become Dante's words, that the love manifested in Christ 'moves the sun and moon and all the stars.' Here is the basis for a doctrine of immanence and to spare; but the vital revelation of God in Christ, the spiritual kernel of the Christian religion, may well allow those speculative constructions of abstract doctrine to assume a subordinate rôle. The world has been given an absolute manifestation of God, and it will not rest content until it has solved the mystery and significance of that manifestation. Christ has compelled us to interpret His Person, for the words still find their echo in our hearts, "What think ye of Christ, Whose Son is He?" Does the Gospel portrait force us to respond with St Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God"? Will nothing less than the confession of St Thomas, "My Lord and my God," do justice to the Historic Figure? The view here assumed towards the Fourth Gospel is that it develops the thought organic to synoptic Christology, and the development has objective validity, not being merely the product of illegitimate subjective idealism working upon historical data that are not warranted by the Synoptic Gospels. If the emphasis here is more upon the *Divine* Sonship combined, in the Prologue, with the Logos-conception, His Godhead is implied in the Synoptists; and the implication has greater force when His life is taken as a *whole* than when isolated miracles, events, or discourses, are torn from their appropriate setting

[1] J. Moffatt, *The Theology of the Gospels*.

to be made the subject of exclusive examination. If, for the purpose of a fuller appreciation of Jesus Christ, analysis must precede synthesis; if it is only a study of the particular that enables us to rise to the universal; yet it is the *final* synthesis, the picture *as a whole*, the Incarnate Person in all His thoughts, words and works, that so irresistibly convinces us of the truth of His inherent and essential Deity. Each detail of the Life may be patient of diverse interpretations, yet, as an organic whole, the Person remains unaltered. He must abide for ever, for the world will never consent to lose the most consummate Figure that has, throughout the ages, appeared in its history, a Figure at once the Ideal of admiration, imitation, aspiration and adoration. One that has made, still makes, and will continue to make, His universal and absolute appeal to the devotion of the heart, to the stricken conscience, and to the distressed in mind and body, will receive little damage, in the long view, from hostile criticism or from the hard heart. Faith, and finally love, must always triumph; and they have but one response to the momentous question 'What think ye of Christ?' and know of one confession to the Jesus of history, 'My Lord and my God.'

Let us, without preconceptions, approach the Gospel Figure, and thereby, from a consideration of what He said and did make an inference as to Who He *was*. Did He *claim* to be supreme among men? Did He definitely assert His equality with God? Did His life justify His claims and assertions? We must be able to say, not merely, 'never man spake as this Man,' but never man lived as this Man. Creed, character and conduct must form one harmonious whole. Such are the problems involved in an examination of the Christ as being the unique, final, and absolute revelation of the supreme God. The ultimate court of appeal must be the impression He produced and still produces on the world as a whole, when the complete picture of His Incarnation is presented for the world's judgment.

"It was His very conception of God as Father, as His Father in a unique sense, and as the Father of men, that determined His preaching of what the Kingdom meant, and differentiated it from current conceptions, eschatological, rabbinic and

nationalist. This is the primary factor in the Christology of the Gospels, and unless it is assigned its full weight the ideas of the kingdom, of man, and of the world fail to occupy their proper focus."[1] However high a man's knowledge of God might be he could never have spoken in terms like those that Jesus spoke; He claimed to be the unique Son of God, *the* Son in the same sense as God was *the* Father. His equality with God He definitely proclaims, "I and My Father are one," and the title "Son of God," as the Jews admitted, raised Him to such an equality. Again, in His connexion with the Father, He is the one Mediator through Whom all men must come; and no man can know Him (Christ) unless he receives a divine inspiration from above. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me": and "no man cometh to Me except it be given him of the Father." He possesses unique *knowledge* of the Father, and all the knowledge that man may possess has been His gift and proceeded through His revelation. "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father: and no one knoweth who the Son is, save the Father; and who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal *Him*." The risen Christ can declare that all power and authority has been given unto Him in heaven and on earth, and this authority He can delegate to those who believe in Him and devote their lives to His service. With His appearance upon earth a new era is inaugurated in the history of man's relation to God; He takes up and completes the work of the Father; His revelation fulfils all previous and lesser revelations, for they all were the promise and prophecy of Him, since He had been the Revealed behind every revelation. He "was the true light, even the Light which lighteth every man coming into the world." The disappearance of the Old Dispensation was a consequence of His advent, but there was continuity throughout; "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." The continuation of the work of the Son is performed by the indwelling operation of the Holy Spirit, but the Incarnation, the manifestation of the Son, is an absolutely indispensable preliminary to the coming of the Spirit. If the Spirit is God Himself in

[1] J. Moffatt, *op. cit.*

activity by revelation, this argues the essential Godhead of the Son, for the Spirit 'proceeds' from the Father and the Son; all three are integral moments or factors in the life of God.

Finally, Christ makes the solemn statement that His eternal home is above, in the realms of transcendent Being; this is His native sphere, this His true abode; the tabernacling in the flesh is the result of an infinite condescension for man's sake, for man's salvation. He knows that on the termination of His life on earth He will depart to be with 'the Father,' He will once again assume the divine prerogatives that are His by right and nature; "I came out from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father." His *unique* relation to the Father is the cause of His unique filial consciousness of that relation which He exhibited on earth. He knew Himself to be above all other of the children of men, and made claims upon their allegiance that only God could make. He knew His Sonship with God, He also knew our sonship with Him; but confusion between them was impossible, and identity was absurd.

But to pursue our examination of the historic Figure as portrayed to us in the Gospels, we may note with what a majestic grandeur, yet gentle touch, He reveals Himself as the Lord of all, receiving the due homage of the lower creation, including the spirits of the nether world, while speaking in accents of authority upon every occasion. Nature owns Him as Lord by silently obeying His commands, the evil spirits do so by their inability to resist them. He claims to be Lord of the Sabbath, the Potentate of time, the Ruler of the destinies of men, and in possession of the keys of life and death. By parable and allegory, the most beautiful that the world has been privileged to hear, He points to *Himself*, and not His teaching or His works, as the central fact. He is the Door, the Good Shepherd, the True Vine, the Bread of Life, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the Resurrection, and the Light of the world.

The significance of the Baptism and Transfiguration is that in Him we must behold the Anointed One, the Beloved of God; exalted above the law, above prophets, and above angels, it was

the good pleasure of the Father that in *Him* should all the fulness dwell.

We are allowed a glimpse into His own consciousness of *Who* He was in His conversation with the woman of Samaria; while He makes an explicit assertion before Pilate, when he learnt that all judgment has to be brought before an ultimate tribunal, where the final trial is based upon the touchstone of Love. In the Fourth Gospel His reiterated claim to be the Supreme One sent from God in the words, "I am *He*," is followed by an indication of the disastrous consequences of the denial of that claim. Again, in the matter of our sins, His forgiveness is God's forgiveness, for He alone knows the Father's heart. By His sinlessness, which is based upon an inherent sanctity, and by the perfect unison of His will with the will of God, He can experience the full force of temptation, and be to us the Saviour and Atoner. The eye of faith is no less certain guide than the eye of sense, and both behold in "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" One Who proclaims the absolute pardon of God in the words, "thy sins are forgiven thee." Has it ever been left on record by any who have made the experiment of accepting His universal invitation "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," that they have been disappointed of their hope? May not the truth of His utterances find ample attestation in all ages and in all countries exclusive of nationality, creed, clime or colour? Are they less true to-day than they were when they were first announced, or will they be less true in ages to come? "I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to Me shall not hunger..."; and again, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." He knows that the last victory is His, for all enemies must be subdued unto Him; the appeal of Incarnate Love knows no failure, but must draw all men to itself; "God so loved the world...." What life is to the living, believing is to the spirit. Repeatedly He tells us that eternal life is synonymous with *believing* in Him, and we may grow through such belief into the "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Not as an act or attitude once for all adopted towards His Person which does not admit of degrees,

but as an advancing *process* by which the whole man is gradually 'baptised into Christ,' must we regard this 'believing' and 'knowing' of the Lord. St John knows nothing of the substantives 'faith' and 'knowledge,' but much of the verbs 'believing' and 'knowing,' and the distinction is of no subordinate significance. Finally, in 'sending' the Holy Spirit He comes Himself as a Personal and Living Presence among men. He promises to be man's Friend, man's Comforter, man's ever-present Companion and Consoler to the end of time. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." "He is the unbidden Guest at every meal, the silent Listener to every conversation, the Judge and Discerner of every transaction, the ministering Comforter in every hour of darkness, and in the lone night of our sorrow the Friend that keepeth closer to us than a brother."[1]

Such is the outline of the portrait revealed to us in the Gospels, such are some of the claims He makes upon man, and such the rewards he offers to all those who accept Him as their supreme Lord, and worship the Father through and as declared by Him. Is this historic Figure unique in the world's evolution? Has the impression He has created upon the mind, heart and spirit of man been of such a nature as to exalt Him far above every child of man, far above the heaven of heavens? Who can doubt that in Christ we are vouchsafed to behold the Most High God Who has communicated Himself without reserve to mankind? Who can study the Gospel narratives, without prejudice and presupposition, and fail to find in them the sense of that *unique* relationship of Christ to God which "lifts Him above, and, even in some measure, separates Him from, His chosen disciples. As we listen to Him there is ever an accent of *authority* higher than can be assumed by a man towards his brethren. In His most familiar intercourse with His most loved followers there is a veiled dignity, an air of reserve, a hidden majesty, which at times bursts forth so as to overawe the boldest of them. We behold the man, the Messiah, but we feel sure that behind

[1] F. Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought.*

that human presence there is something we have *not* seen; we feel that we are in the presence of One Who belongs not to time merely, but to eternity—in short, that in Him *God* is incarnate in our midst."[1] The closer and more intimate our acquaintance with the mysterious, awful, solemn and gracious Figure, the more our heart assures us that nothing less than the words of the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel can interpret Him, for the Life of Jesus of Nazareth is the metaphysic of the 'Word.'

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος, καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος. Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν. Καὶ ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ Πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας.[2]

[1] W. L. Walker, *The Spirit and the Incarnation.*
[2] St John i. 1, 2, 14.

CHAPTER VIII

INCARNATION *and* TRINITY

OUR argument is now over, but completeness demands that we shall add a chapter on the internal relations within the Trinity, for every doctrine of immanence must finally be consummated in the absolute nature of God, Himself a Trinity in Unity. Again, the Christian revelation in Jesus Christ has revealed to the world the distinctions within the Godhead which were but dimly adumbrated by all prior manifestations. Only if He was the *absolute* revelation of God, only if in Him we see God Himself in real Personal form have we any sure ground of such a manifestation of the essential nature of Godhead. All doctrines that would interpret His Person as merely a unique instance of the immanence of God in Him, all theories that see in Him but the culminating example of God's normal method of working in the world and in man, and nothing more, are precluded from asserting the further revelation of the Godhead, such as a true doctrine of Incarnation must always behold in Him. We have no *absolute* revelation of God's nature without a transcendent act on the part of God, The Transcendent, which alone is able to reveal the nature of the Revealer, and which is never wholly comprehended by any immanental process. On the other hand, unless such a revelation consummates by completing God's previous indwelling in the world, we have no continuity and no means of understanding that revelation. In Incarnation, the process is fulfilled by an act without the process; immanence is completed in Transcendence, in which it lives and moves and has its being.

Now the act of creation may be regarded as the primary act of the self-conditioning of God, whereby His infinite and absolute nature expresses itself under limited and finite forms and figures. His greater kenosis in *man* implies the possibility of a greater plerosis, for, as we have seen, this is a necessary universal law or principle in all God's dealings with creation; while the 'impersonal' process of evolution is His progressive Presence

revealing itself within the process in order to raise it to a final and ultimate union with Himself. The presupposition of the *fact* of creation and evolution is the essential nature of the Godhead, whose highest revelation is Love.

> Friendless was the great world-master,
> Lonely in his realms above:
> Called to life an empire vaster—
> Kindred souls to share his love.[1]

God, to be known to man, must be mediated and manifested through the act of self-conditioning; of an unmediated and unmanifested Spirit we should have no knowledge, for 'the One,' the Absolute God, in Himself is formless, 'no man hath seen God at any time.' We must draw a distinction between God '*of* Whom are all things,' and God *through* Whom are all things, while neither may be equated with the Spirit, *by* Whom are all things. The Spirit as mediated in the world proceeds *of* the Father through the Logos; but He is neither the Father in Himself, nor the Logos in Himself. May we say that He is *wider* than the Logos as proceeding from the *Father* and the Son? Walker seems to think that this is the case. The Spirit, he says, is not identical with Christ, but He was "so completely one with it in His Divine-Humanity, that He became its perfect organ and expression." "God through the Spirit fully incarnated Himself in Christ in a permanent Divine-human Personality. The Holy Spirit therefore *includes* the personal presence of Christ."[2] As Incarnate, no doubt the Spirit had a wider range than Christ, for His omnipresence was somehow in abeyance through the original act of Kenosis, but this is not to assert His wider range than the Son as Logos of God. If there is no identity, yet the presence of the Spirit *is* the presence of the Logos, the operation of the Spirit, the operation of the Logos. Again, would it not be preferable to speak of Christ *as* God Incarnate, *as* God the Son, rather than as the perfect organ and expression of the Spirit, or as He in Whom God was incarnate? He is for ever exalted above man, not because of His perfect

[1] W. R. Sorley, quoted in *Moral Values and the Idea of God.* [2] *Op. cit.*

manhood, but because of His Godhead, because the Spirit was His *à priori*, His by nature and by the laws of His being. No second birth was necessary, nor possible for Christ; for the gift of the Spirit came not by an outward bestowal, not by inspiration or infusion, but revealed itself by an inward or immanental unfolding. "By putting off flesh He was a universal presence, and one with the Holy Spirit to become that indwelling Spirit which He promised to His disciples, and which, as the complete expression of the life of God in human form, becomes the Spirit of the new life in our hearts."[1] It is only by virtue of such a unique Incarnation of the Spirit that He can inaugurate an entirely *new* era in the relationship of God to man; and it is only because He is the *Incarnation* of God that He can *be* God to him. Jesus Christ has revealed to us the secret of the universe, the mystery of Being, in that He has revealed *in Persona* the Self-conditioned as the culmination of the Self-conditioning God, as the end of creation. If it is only by an evolutionary process that God can fulfil Himself—not *in order to* arrive in the end at perfection, but *because* He is already perfect—then it is only by an Incarnation that He can fulfil the developing and progressive process. But unless God as Logos, God as 'Word' or 'Reason' is the presupposition, ground, and goal of such a process, Incarnation is either impossible or meaningless. Not because the Logos of God has not been ever-present with man, but because it *has* been so present does Incarnation become rational and significant. The Presence of Christ in the flesh is none other than the same identical Presence as Logos before Incarnation, but the quality, intensity, and intimacy of the Presence have undergone a change. "That which comes to us through Christ is the fulness of that Spirit in which God has ever been most highly and most intimately with men; and this, of course, implies such a *manifestation* of God as shall be the basis of such influences of the Spirit, or the centre from which they shall proceed."[2] Such a manifestation involves, not a mediation of the Spirit, but the reason why the Spirit should *not* be mediated. The Incarnation, so far from being the centre

[1] *Op. cit.* [2] *Op. cit.*

through which all revelation of the *mediated* Spirit must proceed, is the centre through which the Spirit proceeds as unmediated. All manifestation may be mediation, but the closer the manifestation to the manifested the less the mediation. Now Jesus Christ *is* what He reveals, manifestation and manifested, revelation and Revealed coincide. Mediation, therefore, takes place not within the objective revelation of God in Christ, but within the subjective appropriation of that revelation by man. Creation, being the self-conditioning of God, implies mediation of His absolute Being, and this mediation finds its counterpart in Kenosis as the mediation of the Logos of God in Incarnation. The *fact* of Incarnation, however, is not a mediation but a revelation of the Spirit, or of God's absolute Nature. The Spirit is now no longer confined to 'impersonal' influence, suggestion, and inspiration, but can be present with man as an incarnate personal Presence in which the Spirit is completely and fully manifested. Man may now know God, not as formerly by type, symbol, and figure, through the mediated Logos; but immediately, directly, as He is in Himself through the Spirit, by the revelation of the Spirit itself as Incarnate in the Person of Christ. Always apprehending Him through Logos, for only so can He be apprehended, we now may apprehend Him through Logos Incarnate, or Jesus Christ, that is, as He is essentially as self-conditioned by absolute Spirit. The Incarnation is thus the revelation of God through the original act of Self-conditioning in creation, and it is the highest manifestation of the Absolute possible in any world in which Spirit has differentiated itself into subject and object. There is, therefore, a profound truth in Hegel's remark that God as known in Incarnation is not known in His perfection, while he maintains that it is the true and perfect God, 'Very God of Very God,' that is Incarnate. God in His perfection, no man has seen or can see, but the highest form under which He can reveal Himself in finite creation is in Incarnation, which is the revelation of the perfect God Himself. Jesus Christ must be both truly God and truly Incarnate, for otherwise there can be no absolute revelation of *God*. "To hold that the incarnate God was not fully God, or not really incarnate,

was to destroy all the significance of the incarnation, while removing none of its difficulties. It is as hopeless as the similar attempt to bridge over the gulf between God and Nature by the length of a chain of emanations."[1]

Man's appropriation of the truth of Incarnation through the Spirit, whereby the Spirit dwells within him as an Incarnate Presence, must not be confused with the revelation of the Spirit itself to him. While the former has degrees and is always growing in intensity and depth, the latter has the character of absoluteness in every manifestation of itself. In the use of mystical language to describe this mutual indwelling of the Spirit of God in the spirit of man, and his indwelling in Him, however close may be the relationship between them, there is never a time when they are *identical*; this is a reversion from the language of spirit and spiritual union, to the language of logic and metaphysics with their intellectual and exclusive categories. Philosophy and the philosophy of faith have each their own distinct spheres. The Spirit is nearer to us than we are to ourselves, yet He is not what we are. He respects our likeness to Himself, but never supersedes the difference of our being. When we hear such language as the following, therefore, it is always necessary to remember this vital distinction. "Man knows God only in so far as God Himself knows Himself in Man. This knowledge is God's self-consciousness, but it is at the same time a knowledge of God on the part of Man, and this knowledge of God by Man is a knowledge of Man by God. The Spirit of Man whereby he knows God, is simply the Spirit of God Himself."[2] Is man's knowledge of God ever a moment in the self-consciousness of God? Can we avoid importing the time factor into His eternity by so regarding it, since there is a development, an advance, in man's knowledge of God which is proportionate to his growth in Godlikeness? The goal of this philosophy must lead us to an Absolutism which is far removed from the Absolute, or the true nature of the Godhead, including its relation to all that is other than it. The Incarnation and its extension in the Presence of the Spirit will justify no such a metaphysic of man's

[1, 2] J. M. E. McTaggart, *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*.

self-consciousness; indeed, it is difficult upon such a basis to see how the Incarnation could possess that uniqueness that it claims in fact to possess. Would not all men be in their respective degree, depending upon their knowledge and realisation of God, *incarnations* of His Spirit, in precisely the same sense that Jesus Christ was so? But this is not the consequence of the central fact of the Christian revelation. Christ is for it unique because absolute; He is other than and exalted far above all men because of His inherently divine nature as the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, *not* because of his sinlessness and perfect life on earth as *Man*, since that is possible for all moral and free beings. Christianity maintains "that God was in Christ, not merely as a motive power or mere activity, but in a conscious, personal mode of existence of the Deity apart from the 'Father'; that in the Incarnation the Most High God was present with men and had not withheld the highest, but had communicated Himself without reserve in Christ."[1] His divine Personality had a pre-existence with God from all eternity, not necessarily as a Person, but as Personal, before it took to itself human nature, a nature never alien to it, in Incarnation. The divine nature existed always, the human began in time, and ended in time. 'Creation and elevation to Divine Personality are not two divisible moments.' The vitally significant fact of Christ's pre-existence with God differentiates Him from all the prophets, teachers, and revealers of God that have appeared during the long course of religious history. 'In the beginning was the Word' is the transcendent note which exalts Him above all temporal and finite evolution by assigning to Him a place in ultimate reality. His Incarnation involved no externality; for being the supreme source through Whom the Spirit proceeded to man, and through Whom the worlds were made, He did but come unto His own in coming down from the Father's side. His the Spirit was essentially, and in giving Him to man He gave Himself, His life, His love, His Father.

Only if Christ is such a pre-existent *real personal* distinction, or hypostasis, in the Godhead; only if He was with God and was

[1] Dorner, quoted by Walker.

God, can He shed abroad the Spirit, which is God Himself as He proceeds from Himself, into our hearts. Only if God is Love can the Spirit be His, the highest attribute of which is Itself Love. "Within the soul by His Spirit in Himself, God in the totality of His Being, abides as the soul's other. The distinction and the incorporation are alike necessitated by the nature of God and by the qualities of Love, the essence of Deity, the highest good of all souls."[1] From empirical evidence in the world we can observe the influence that the Spirit's operation in the lives of men has had, which tends to justify the centrality of the Person of Christ and His innate Godhead. If the revelation of God in the world has, in the fulness of the times, attained finality, He can now be known as He is in Himself, while all power, truth, and Life must proceed from this central source. To possess a full understanding of the Christian revelation is to see all the fulness of God unfolding within that revelation by the gradual operation of the Spirit upon the spirits of men. Thus we may say, either that it is God in Christ that constitutes this supreme revelation, or that it is Christ Himself, for these are but two modes of expressing the same fundamental truth. In observance of the general nature of the complementary characters of activity and passivity, Christ is 'filled up all in all' that He may 'fill up all in all'; but in this single instance bestowal and apprehension can go no further. God is perfectly in Him, not as an immanental but as an Incarnate Presence, differentiating Him therefore from man, even as supremely Godlike; for in such a man the Godlikeness would have proceeded from the power and indwelling of the Incarnate Person within him, thereby rendering the distinction infinite between him and Christ. Only upon the basis of such a radical and absolute difference between the Incarnation of God in the unique Person, and His Presence through Incarnation in all men, have we sufficient data, either for an absolute revelation of God at all, or for the implication of that revelation, namely, the Trinitarian conception of the Godhead. Can a doctrine of pure immanence lead us to a new doctrine of God,

[1] F. W. Butler, *Can we dispense with Christianity?*

can it give us the satisfaction of all these new relationships to Him which the Incarnation undoubtedly has given us? We require an *objective* revelation of the ultimate nature of reality, the Fact of the Universe. Can immanence supply such a revelation, or ever carry us beyond the very limited sphere of ideal Humanity, as anthropomorphically conceived, without the Christological centre? Our maintenance has been that it is only an Incarnation, as involving the immanence in the world of the Transcendent Reality itself, that is adequate for the religious or spiritual consciousness of mankind. Only God as He is in Himself as Son can finally and fully satisfy God as He has once and for all conditioned Himself at creation, or self-objectification, in finite spirits. God as ideal is but the subjective counterpart of God as Fact, the objective, because externalised, reality. A true doctrine of God, therefore, a true theology, can alone guarantee a true anthropology, or doctrine of Man; man is completed in God through the Incarnation of God in Himself, as Logos Son.

In conclusion we may turn to the 'Persons' of the Trinity in themselves, as suggesting this *necessity* of Incarnation; not so much in order to complete the initial act of creation, as to reveal the essential nature of Godhead as one of *Love*. Theism passes into Trinitarianism because the revelation of God in Christ contained implicitly such an inference respecting the Source of that revelation. It 'became impossible' to 'think out' the Godhead, unless some such distinctions as are implied in the Trinity obtained in fact to the nature of God; the precise nature of those distinctions, however, is utterly beyond man's power to comprehend. There will always be the profoundest truth in St Augustine's memorable words that "three persons" were employed "not that it might be spoken, but that it might not be left unspoken." By their use, "diversity was not meant, but only singleness denied." "For God is more truly thought than He is uttered, and exists more truly than He is thought." Not only must language apologise for her poverty, but thought also for *her* incapacity to comprehend the highest truth; "He is, by this alone is He comprehended." Dr Dorner provides us

with yet another caution of a different order, but one that the abstract thought of to-day should constantly bear in mind throughout any consideration of the Divine Being. We must guard against the error of thinking that "an aseity, infinitude, omnipotence, rent asunder from Holy Love, and not Holy Love itself, constitutes the highest, the inmost in God, yea, His very essence and nature."[1] "It is thinking that there is some *other* fundamental Divine substance." But if Love is the highest revelation vouchsafed to us of God's nature, yet, in our zeal for this love, let us not degrade or lessen its value, its inestimable significance, by thinking that anything *less* than Love will suffice to interpret the 'Persons.' *Ethical* and *spiritual* categories are inadequate unless they move on the plane of love, and *neither* need necessarily do so. Love includes by transcending all categories, for all reflect its glory and its radiance, but none alone nor all together are what it is. He only who *abides* in Love may behold the Trinity; not he who *apprehends* God as Goodness, or Truth, or Beauty, nor even he who *apprehends* Him as Love; but he who ABIDES in Love, and knows by so abiding. The doctrine of God or of the Trinity, then, is the doctrine of Love and the nature of Love which is the revelation of the Absolute *as Absolute*, not as He manifests Himself under relative attributes.

Now in the Fourth Gospel there is an explicit statement of the *identity* of the 'Word' with the historic Person of Jesus Christ. He pre-existed at God's right hand from all eternity, as Logos; not necessarily as the Person Who made His appearance in the flesh. Perhaps the charge of tritheism could not be avoided if Jesus Christ pre-existed as the Person that He was on earth within the Divine essence; but such an inference is neither demanded nor warranted by Christianity. Rather than adopt such an unthinking Trinitarianism, we maintain that He represents in the flesh the principle of an eternal Sonship in God, which principle He manifested in the only possible way, and in the highest possible way, to man. Differently expressed, that the 'Word was with God and was God,' is the eternal verity and prototype of the Word becoming Flesh, and the

[1] Dorner, quoted by Walker.

Father abiding in Him. Surely such a view preserves us from tritheistic conceptions of God, by preserving the *unity* of the Divine Nature. We had occasion to remark before that the distinction between the Godhead and God is illegitimate, as it seemed to us; so now may we not say that the illegitimacy lies in the tritheism concealed in the distinction? God is not merely the first movement of the Godhead, but the movement takes place within Him, being the beginning and end of the movement and 'all in all.' May we not assert that the 'other fundamental Divine substance' begins to emerge as a consequence of such a distinction? Here, however, we touch upon the fringe of a problem that cannot be approached at this stage of our enquiry. Dr Tennant disallows all identification of the properties usually assigned to the Persons of the Trinity with the Persons themselves, and at the same time is careful to specify in what sense Christ may be a pre-existent subject. "Incarnation if it imply *volition* of a pre-existent subject, is a misnomer. If Christ is a pre-existent subject we are committed to tritheism. What religious value belongs to Trinitarianism is due to its specification, not of the different agencies of the one God, but of the agencies of distinct agents. If the Trinitarian idea of God is to be credited with superior philosophical value to theism which recognises no intrinsic and eternal differentiation in the Godhead—as for instance in mediating the divine self-consciousness without resort to an eternal finite world, or in explaining how God can eternally be Love, or in maintaining that God is a social being—it must be in virtue of its being tritheistically conceived. The statement that the Persons are characterized respectively by the properties of aseity, begottenness, and procession, passes over, without any sense of the enormity of the transition, into the statement that the Persons *are* these *proprietates*. 'I and the Father are one' and 'I am in the Father' cannot be interpreted individualistically until we know in what sense 'in' and 'one' are to be taken. Can anything but a subject hold loving communion?"[1] We agree that the Trinity must be free from all

[1] F. R. Tennant, "The Present Condition of the Doctrines of the Incarnation and the Trinity," *Constructive Quarterly*, 1920.

implications with the finite world, it must also be interpreted otherwise than to make God 'a social Being,' since the former involves all the difficulties of self-realisation in God and an already ethical perfection in Him, while the latter would seem to necessitate some sort of *impersonal οὐσία* as the essence of Godhead, whereby it was constituted a *unity*. The same writer sees a similar error in those thinkers who, under the influence of immanentism, "expound a doctrine of the Trinity in which the Son and the Spirit are spoken of as eternal elements in the life of God."[1] This, he thinks, "seems to imply that the eternal Son is but a personification of God's immanence in the world, and to be clinging to a shadow when the substance of Trinitarian doctrine has been discarded."[2] Such an immanental interpretation 'really does away with the Trinity.' He thinks that they mistake the greater fact of the eternal Word, for the lesser one of the eternal world, and thereby fall into a false Absolutism. Instead of the Word being the reality of the finite world it is made but an ideal construction, having its basis upon the evolutionary and temporal process of terrestrial development; or otherwise, the Son has only an ideal existence in the minds of men, perhaps also in the Mind of God. This is, of course, the denial of the Trinity, such as is maintained in Christian doctrine, and such as may be inferred from, because implicitly embodied in, the Christian revelation. Not the least important factor in the Incarnation is the presence of One Who had, from all eternity, a *real* pre-existent Life. Is not this implied in the Logos-conception, the 'Spirit' in the Gospels, and in Christ's continual reference to 'His Father' sending the Son and doing the works? Surely we have no *Incarnation* without the advent of such a subject, and no revelation of the Godhead without such an Incarnation.

If the Trinity transcends all metaphysical attempts to comprehend its nature, it no less transcends an interpretation upon ethical grounds. Both dialectic and ethic contribute their all-important part, but both are inadequate to offer any final solu-

[1, 2] F. R. Tennant, "The Present Condition of some Fundamental Christian Doctrines," *Constructive Quarterly*, 1920.

tion, since the Trinity itself is their beginning and end. Because the Spirit as Spirit is Love, it transcends the True and the Good, both of which flow from Spirit as their central source. The Absolute, or the Godhead, is other than the ideal of the Reason, the ideal of the Will, or the ideal of the Affections; it must embrace, without losing the distinction, of each of these. Love is just of that nature to embrace all without the destruction or merging of their identity; it is therefore the supreme revelation of the Absolute on earth, and the highest manifestation of His nature to man.

In emphasising the *ethical* character of the relation of Christ to God Professor Mackintosh asserts His oneness of *will* as the cardinal thing. 'The ultimate and central reality of things is Will.' Their wills were identical. "His relation with the eternal necessitates Him being One whose life is definitely centred within the life of God." "Our deepest ground for predicating the divinity of Jesus is the presence in His life of that love, holiness, and redeeming power which constitute the essential definition of Godhead."[1] The New Testament provides an ample field for evidence of His *ethical* union with the Father; the words of Christ Himself illustrate this, "My meat and drink is to do the will of Him that sent Me..."; "...nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done." But harmony of will, although essential, cannot be the determining factor of His Godhead. To express it otherwise, His oneness with the Father was not the cause but the consequence of His Divinity; He was Divine first, and ethically perfect afterwards; God always, Man in the fulness of the times. Because He was so He could set "Himself up as a perfect standard for all other men; they felt the constraint of His claim as an ultimate obligation." "If His sinlessness was merely acquired, while consistent with immanence and constituting Him a model, would have left Him incapable of the last expression of God's nature in atoning love. It was holiness conserved on the basis of an *inherent* sanctity."[2] This is the ethical expression of that view of His Person which differen-

[1] H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ*.
[2] F. Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought*.

tiates Him from other men in that He moved *within* 'His native sphere of transcendence,' or *within* His own nature; all others move to it from outside; while their natures are not *unfolded* but *acquired*.

Now if *ethical* union with God is insufficient to explain the relation between Him as Incarnate and the Father, it is similarly insufficient to interpret the union of the Persons of the Trinity as they are essentially. Oneness of will, therefore, is incapable of describing the absolute unity of the Divine Life.

The problem of the Trinity in Unity must always remain a profound mystery, however we may seek to grasp its nature by symbols, analogies, or categories drawn from the infinitely lower world of finite comprehension. He who contemplates it in silence, without attempting to subject it to the fierce rays of any analytic treatment, comes perhaps nearest to its true nature; for as St Augustine says, It more truly *exists* than is *thought*.

The incompleteness of our whole conception of personality, human as well as Divine, and the utter inadequacy of our knowledge regarding the relation between spirit and spirit on earth, must constitute a necessary limitation to our solution of the Triune Majesty. Our psychology and philosophy of the 'self,' as also our theology of God, are all far too materialistic, or abstractly ethical, to even catch sight of the mystical and spiritual union of spirits. How then may they hope to understand the Divine Unity, the silent mystery of all Being? "The more we withdraw from any concept of personality as 'an impervious unit,' the more we realise that in the exercise of the highest qualities we are fused from our separateness, the more does the self affirm and find itself through its self-merging in the Whole, its genuine self-donation."[1] The universal law of dying to live finds its supreme example in the Trinity itself, for it is the very Law of Love. Eternal self-impartation in Kenosis and self-fulfilment in Plerosis is the law of polarity within the Godhead. The threefold unity may also be conceived as one of internal self-realisation, through internal self-communication to Absolute Spirit, which is reflected in creation as the threefold

[1] F. W. Butler, *op. cit.*

movement of "internal self-realisation, external self-communication, and satisfaction in the return of creation to Himself in fellowship and service."[1] Man is by his nature Godlike, and by his history may grow into fuller and fuller Godlikeness; the closer his approximation to the Divine Image, the greater will be his knowledge of the Divine, for like is known only by like.

> Know thou thyself: as thou hast learned of Me,
> I made thee three in one, and one in three—
> Spirit and Mind and Form, immortal Whole,
> Divine and undivided Trinity.[2]

For let him remember that

> To spirit only is the spirit-life revealed:
> God alone can see God's glory: God alone can feel
> God's love.[3]

> It is not wisdom to be only wise,
> And on the inward vision close the eyes,
> But it is wisdom to believe the heart.
> . . . . . .
> Our knowledge is a torch of smoky pine
> That lights the pathway but one step ahead.
> Across a void of mystery and dread.
> Bid, then, the tender light of faith to shine
> By which alone the mortal heart is led
> Unto the thinking of the thought divine.[4]

[1] Lidgett, quoted by F. Platt.
[2] J. Rhoades, *Out of the Silence*.
[3] E. G. A. Holmes, *Nirvana*.
[4] George Santayana, *O World, thou choosest not*.

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